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THREE MILLION MORE CIVILIANS

THE new demobilisation plan shows that the Government has thought again, and thought to some purpose. The age plus length of service basis is retained; and the principle of parity of release as between Home and Overseas personnel is upheld—with the qualification (important in the case of numerically large Groups) that Home releases within each single Group notified for demobilisation will not be delayed through non-arrival of the Group's Overseas contingent. A substantial acceleration, however, of Class A releases is to be secured by speeding up the machine and providing ampler transport for repatriation; and volunteers for Class B release are to be encouraged by the promise that (subject to control for a minimum period of six months) they will be freed from "direction" on the date they would have become due for Class A release. The net result is that approximately 400,000 men and women, in addition to the 1,100,000 already announced, are to be released by the end of this year; and, by July, 1946, the combined strength of the Services will be reduced, from a pre-demobilisation figure of 5,136,400, to 2,232,800.

It may be asked whether this country can afford to carry, for more than a year after the end of the European war, the burden of Armed Forces of this magnitude. (The Army will still be retaining nearly 40 per cent. of its war establishment, and the Air Force—thanks partly, no doubt, to its transport commitments—about 60 per cent.) Questions may be raised whether the still modest rate of selective releases will be sufficient to overcome bottlenecks caused by the absence of key men in manufacturing industry and transport, and whether it is wise to call up as many as 50,000 men from civil occupations, as well as the 110,000 eighteen-year-old conscripts. Further consideration, too, will have to be given to the problem of compensating officers whose release is held up by the fairly sweeping "postponement" order promulgated for the Army of the Rhine. But, with these qualifications, Mr. Isaac's statement will be generally welcomed as proof that the Cabinet recognises that the country's whole future depends on the speedy redeployment of man-power for productive ends. Whatever the Service Chiefs may think, Britain's ability to retain Big Power status depends ultimately, not on the size of Forces mobilised in this uneasy aftermath of war, but on her economic recovery.

The decision and vigour now displayed by the Government in this vital issue of re-allocating man-power will blunt the edge of Opposition criticism when Parliament reassembles next week. Tory intentions were manifestly to exploit impatience, both inside and outside the House, at the cautious, "slow motion" impression conveyed by Ministers, not so much in preparing the extensive programme of promised legislation, as in the fields where results can be achieved by administrative action. As it is, though the Cabinet will doubtless be asked to render an account of its stewardship during the Recess in such matters as Housing and Town Planning, the State Medical Service and temporary provision for "redundant" war-workers, it can at least confound its critics by pointing to bold and energetic action in the priority issue, demobilisation. And its supporters, whose continued basic loyalty is proved by this week's bye-election results, will also be encouraged by the fact that the new demobilisation announcement was accompanied by a much fuller factual presentation of numbers and groups involved, and by a simple, commonsense radio explanation of plans by the Minister of Labour. Noting with warm approval the Government's decision to establish a Press Bureau attached to the Cabinet itself, we look, with confidence, to Ministers to adopt the wise policy of telling the people the facts. All the facts, good or ill, all the time.

European Transport

Against the background of Big Five disagreements, Mr. Noel-Baker has scored an encouraging success in securing general adhesion to the agreement setting up E.C.I.T.O.—European Central Inland Transport Organisation. We have still a long road to travel before reaching real, effectively integrated international control of the Continent's various systems. The new Organisation's executive powers are seemingly limited to (*a*) restoring to member States transport material discovered outside the territory of its pre-war owners, and (*b*) allocating to various countries, according to their assessed needs, equipment released by the Allied military authorities. For the rest, the functions of E.C.I.T.O. are to be purely advisory; but it will aim at securing co-operation between national railway administrations and at ensuring a unified clearing system for traffic. This is at least a beginning made in one important sector of the field in which practical collaboration between nations is possible.

Far Eastern Nationalism

Mr. Lawson, now touring the Far East, is reported to have said that Britain's obligations to her Allies do not involve fighting for the French against the people of Indo-China or for the Dutch against the Javanese Nationalists. This is the issue involved in the Annamite rising in Saigon and the tense situation in Batavia. In Indo-China the position is complicated by the parallel existence of a genuine Resistance formed in 1941 soon after the Japanese occupied the country—the League for Independence of Indo-China—and the Vyatnam Party consisting of violently nationalistic Annamites, hostile both to the French and the Chinese and used now by the Japanese to make trouble in the country. Added to this fact is the further confusion caused by the use of Japanese troops "to keep order." To the Indo-Chinese this looks like an Allied effort at all costs to reinforce the unpopular French rule. The political problems of a colonial people, struggling both against Japanese occupation and for their own independence, should have been foreseen as they were in Burma where the Allied Armies had the closest co-operation of the anti-Fascist League, and in Malaya, where the Allies were helped by the People's Resistance Army. The League for Independence of Indo-China, which includes the new Annam Party, certain groups of the Annamite Nationalist Party, the Indo-Chinese Communist Party and several other progressive organisations, had already established contact with the Allies, and last March the Fourteenth Air Force dropped

American arms into Indo-China, as well as officers to demonstrate their use. Japan's collapse, however, created an unexpected situation: there was little fighting except with the Annamites after the Japanese surrender. We do not yet know the strength of the Independence League; but its programme, which includes the "election of a representative Assembly from all classes of the population, whose task it would be to make a Constitution for the Indo-Chinese State with a form of government based on democratic principles" is likely to make a wide appeal. So far the Japanese have been able to exploit the opposition to France by using an irresponsible section of the Annamites—the Vyatnam Party—to make trouble for the Allies. The solution lies with Paris rather than Saigon. If the Indo-Chinese were convinced of a progressive French policy, and if the Allied Commander co-operated with the Independence League, as in the case of Burma, the insurrectionists would lose their *point d'appui*, and the present troubles would probably end.

Indonesians and the Dutch

In Batavia, British reinforcements have been sent in "to keep order," but a considerable section of the Australian Trade Union Movement, led by the dock workers, have refused to sail the Dutch ships which the Netherlands East Indies Government sought to secure from the Allied shipping pool. The Waterside Workers' Federation in Sydney has advised all branches not to work vessels on which the Indonesian seamen are on strike, or to load vessels carrying munitions, which they fear may be used against the Indonesian Republican Government set up by Dr. Soekarno, leader of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement. Dr. Soekarno outwardly co-operated with the Japanese throughout their occupation; but he seems to have played a double role, by strengthening an independence movement. He has given direct orders to all Indonesians to co-operate with the Allied Occupation Force in maintaining law and order; and their help would seem to be more desirable than the retention of the Japanese forces still marching round, guarding Dutch officials, and acting as sentries. Meanwhile, though Mr. van de Plas, Chief of the N.E.I. Civil Administration, has invited Indonesian leaders to discuss with him the future policy for Java, the Netherlands Government in The Hague has refused to open discussions with the Soekarno Republican Government, stating at the same time that occupation will be confined for the moment to Batavia and Sourabaya. This leaves over the question who will exert authority in the rest of the island. It is still too soon to assess the strength of the Soekarno Government, which has proclaimed a Republican Constitution, guaranteeing universal franchise, a five-year Parliament of one House, universal education, State control of production and land, freedom of the press, speech, religion and trade unions.

Argentine Repression

Last July, when President Farrell promised free elections before the end of the year, the Argentine public took the declaration at its face value and began to reorganise their political parties—virtually broken after the military putsch of 1943—and openly to criticise the dictatorship. The press, especially after the censorship was lifted, came out strongly for a restoration of democratic rights. Recent events seem to show that the promise of free elections was a demagogic move designed to forestall rising criticism of the administration both at home and abroad; Colonel Peron, the real ruler of Argentina to-day, intended to use agrarian reform to secure a plebiscite vote from the peons. But he soon found that even temporary relaxations in the dictatorship offered more opportunity to his opponents than he could afford. Using an alleged revolutionary plot as an excuse—a trick which they tried once before with an equal absence of evidence—Peron and Farrell carried out widespread arrests and searches. For the moment terror may still maintain the Colonels in power. But how long can they last? Reliable reports from Buenos Aires reveal that their dictatorship was on the verge of collapse at the very moment when Mr. Stettinius saved it by securing Argentine admission to the United Nations. Since then there have been changes at the State Department; Mr. Braden, whose experience as United States Ambassador in Buenos Aires has made him a bitter opponent of the regime, is not likely to continue Mr. Rockefeller's maladroit handling of American political relations with Argentina. His colleague, Dean Acheson, denouncing Argentine evasion of international commitments, states that the United States wants to postpone the Pan-American Conference at Rio, since no further agreements can be made with the present Argentine regime. But the most necessary development is unity among the Opposition elements in Argentina. Their divisions are the main reason why the regime survives.

The Size of Families

The ten per cent. sample inquiry which the Royal Commission on Population has decided to make is designed to fill a glaring gap in official knowledge of the distribution of children. It is known, of course, that the *average* number of children born to each married woman fell, between the 1870's and the 1930's, from about five to two; and the Commission is satisfied that this decline resulted not from any biological increase in sterility but from deliberate limitation of families. But what is the "break-down" of this average? Does it reflect a fairly uniform decrease, or is it heavily "weighted" by the number of households who remain childless? Since the last family census was held in 1911, the answers to these and other kindred questions are not forthcoming; nor is it known whether there is any correlation between the occupation of the husband and marital fertility. If the Government is to adopt a "positive" population policy—e.g., increased children's allowances—it must have a statistical basis. Unfortunately, the factual picture will throw little light on the psychological question: are families limited out of a growing sense of responsibility towards children, or because children, except to the rich, mean self-denial?

Satellite Towns

The New Towns Committee which Mr. Silkin has appointed, with Lord Reith as chairman, to study and advise on the "policy of planned decentralisation from congested urban areas," will have to find solutions for some tricky problems. In the first place, what local authority is to be primarily responsible for the development of a satellite town—that of the urban area which is decanting excess population or that of the "reception area"? There is much to be said for having a single authority responsible; but, until the satellite town's population is sufficient to form an adequate electorate, it may be necessary—if a wide enough view of development is to be taken—to establish an interim administration, composed perhaps of representatives of the two local authorities concerned at each end of the migration, *plus* representatives of the County Council (or Councils) involved. But larger questions than local administration will arise. To what extent can migration be "directed," either in the case of individuals or of factories? It is no good decanting population from congested or overgrown urban areas if the emigrants, for lack of attractive local jobs near their new homes, have to travel daily to their old work. And are these new towns to specialise in a single industry (with, one presumes, some ancillary trades), or is an attempt to be made to secure a more balanced economy less vulnerable to trade fluctuations? The answer to this question is bound up with the character of the over-populated areas which it is specially desired to "thin," as well as the larger, and still unsettled issue of industrial location.

Appointed Days

Miss Wilkinson's announcement that the new school-leaving age is to be brought into force in April, 1947, and that Local Education Authorities should be ready to establish County Colleges not later than April, 1950, prompts sobering reflections. If it will take so long to do these two things, how much longer will it take to raise the general leaving age to sixteen, to get technical education firmly on its feet, and to bring the primary schools up to reasonable standards of efficiency in premises, staffing and equipment? The difficulty is lack of teachers even more than of buildings. The teachers released from the Forces will all be needed to make good wastage; and the one reform of raising the leaving age to fifteen will require 13,000 additional teachers at the standard of 30 pupils to a class. In relation to needs, the emergency training schemes have so far been going very slow. Only twenty buildings have yet been acquired for use as training colleges, and the twenty more that are to be acquired next year will take time to settle down to work. It will be unfortunate if public opinion, having helped to get the new Education Act on the Statute Book, fails to exercise the pressure that will still be needed, even more locally than centrally, to get it carried speedily into effect.

Cotton Falls into Line

Sir Stafford Cripps has emerged victorious from the first round of his campaign. The proposed "Working Party" to formulate a plan of reorganisation has been accepted by the cotton industry, and will now be able to get down actively to its job. This is important, because it involves recognition both of parity between workers and employers in planning the industry's future, and the acceptance of outside representation to put the public point of view. Sir Stafford is rightly stressing the point that the future of industries is not simply a matter to be settled by those engaged in them, even if workers as well as employers take part in devising the plan. It is a matter of public interest, in which the consumer and the State, now responsible for ensuring full employment, are deeply concerned. Similar "working parties" will produce proposals for the reorganisation of a number of other industries. Of course, the new technique does not prejudge at all the issues of industrial government and control in the future. If, however, the tripartite form is deemed suitable for planning, it will not be easy to depart from it in drawing up actual schemes of future control. The Public Board, representing the State as well as the various groups within the industry concerned, seems to be emerging as the natural instrument for the control of large industries not nationalised.

Motor Vehicle Duties

Some newspapers have announced with assurance that Mr. Dalton intends to replace the present system of motor taxation by a small, flat-rate Licence duty *plus* an increased Excise Duty on petrol and diesel oil. The motor manufacturers, it is said, now think that it will pay them to forgo their present shelter under the H.P. tax and to compensate for keener American competition in the British market by larger British exports of biggish cars suitable for overseas markets. If true, this conversion is surprising; and it is well to bear in mind that, from the Chancellor's standpoint, the last thing that is to be desired in immediate circumstances is that dollars should have to be found for British purchases of American automobiles. Equally there is a strong case at present for excluding, as far as possible, from British roads the large car which eats up petrol imports. On the assumption (unlikely, as we see it) of this radical change in the incidence of motor taxation, the Government would clearly have to ration imports

RUSSIA AND THE WEST

It may be better for the Conference of Foreign Ministers to break down completely than to cover failure with insincere formulas. Statesmen who cannot agree even on the communique announcing their disagreement had better part and think again. They will have to think again because on some points decisions must be taken. The issue of procedure which led to the formal suspension of the Conference was only a Soviet way of calling off abortive discussion. As an alternative, Mr. Molotov suggests a series of agreements negotiated by the Powers specially interested, while Mr. Byrnes, in a conciliatory statement, proposes a new Peace Conference of all the main belligerents. Mr. Bevin, we presume, would accept this suggestion; certainly it will be welcomed by the Dominions and some other Powers. Russia's attitude is less certain. Mr. Molotov has now left for Moscow to talk it over with Marshal Stalin.

The causes of failure are deep-seated. They spring from history and the structure of States. The Russian public are led to believe that only the Western Powers are to blame; readers of our press assume that the fault is wholly Russian. The case against Russian diplomacy is obviously strong. It is based on profound suspicions of the West. Suspicion was a characteristic of Tsarist Russia, and it has been reinforced by the long and discreditable story of Western hostility and boycott, from the armed Allied invasion of Soviet Russia after the last war up to Munich and the refusal of the Soviet Alliance in 1939. We are told by those who have recently come from Russia that they believe that the refusal of the Allies to put the atomic bomb at the disposal of the Security Council has greatly increased Russia's fear of our intentions. (No one, we hope, suggests the secrets of the bomb should be posted by registered letter to Moscow or any other capital city; the failure is to use the bomb as a lever for creating a genuine security organisation.)

After her immense efforts and losses in the war—the population of Russia is reduced by something between twenty and thirty million—victorious Russia is in an intensely sensitive and nationalistic mood. The Russians are frequently unreasonable, exasperating and mysterious. They act unilaterally and not always in strict conformity with the spirit of past agreements. They appear to think of their own security and of nothing else. Their diplomats know little or nothing of public opinion or the strength of different groups in Britain and America; they exaggerate pinpricks and fail to understand that in our curious Western democracies, Foreign Offices may continue to intrigue against them even while statesmen genuinely seek their co-operation. When Molotov hints that Russia would like Tripolitania, he is not putting forward a serious claim to a base in the Mediterranean; he is only saying, in undiplomatic language, that Russia has as much right to a place in North Africa as the British to Hong Kong or America to naval bases in the Pacific. When the Americans make a sensible proposal that we should all share in developing the waterways of Europe, the Kremlin sees nothing but an intrigue for re-establishing a system of espionage and anti-Soviet activity in the Balkans.

If the U.S.S.R. is open to the criticism that foreign policy should not be founded on suspicion, Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes have done much to confirm these suspicions. They could have chosen no worse ground to stand on than the lack of "democracy" in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. The Russians can only regard it as hypocrisy when Powers which recognise Franco Spain and administer autocratically large sections of the world refuse to recognise Governments in the Balkans on the grounds that they are not democratic. The Government of Hungary, for instance, which is at long last carrying the land reform which every Liberal and Socialist has demanded for generations, is certainly more representative than the Horthy administration which came to power with the aid of Allied bayonets in 1919. One of the few certainly good results of this war is that Europe will be rid of that Magyar aristocracy whose tyranny was singularly mean and brutal, which was a centre of disruption and bellicosity between the two wars, and which was an open ally of the Nazis during the war. The case in Bulgaria and Rumania is almost equally strong. In neither of these countries has there ever been Western democracy, nor have the conditions for it existed. We are playing with words dishonestly when we pretend that it has.

Moreover, it must seem strange to the Soviet Union, when it is blamed for setting up a closed sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, to find that British newspapers do not also criticise the unilateral and imperialist policy of the United States in the Pacific. Russia, in fact, is not the only Power which regards America's seizure of strategic islands and her policy in Japan as the creation of a vast area of exclusive military aggrandisement. The truth is that nationalism and imperialism have been strengthened by the war, and that we are witnessing, not a display of wickedness by a single Power, but a continuation, by all the great States, of the old game of power politics in a new and menacing phase.

It is not yet certain, but it seems unpleasantly probable, that the Great Powers have in effect decided to divide the world into zones of influence. We have resisted this conclusion as long as we could, because the prospects of peace are not good in a world in which three great States build up their strength against each other in vast exclusive spheres of influence. Yet if that is the situation, we must face it, do our best to minimise the risks of war, and watch earnestly in the next phase for any chance of building a world organisation. We must recast our ideas, consider what is vital to our civilisation, where we can usefully exercise power and at what point diplomatic intervention will be sensible and with what it is better not to meddle.

On one point we should be absolutely clear. There is cant talk of "appeasement" of Russia, and a parallel drawn between the Soviet encroachments and those of Nazi Germany before the war. The parallel is stupid, misleading and extremely dangerous. For the first object of Soviet policy is to preserve the peace. To believe otherwise is to display either ignorance or prejudice. There are few homes in Russia which have not lost a bread-winner; the devastation and horror through which Russia has passed is the uppermost thought in the mind of every Soviet citizen. We have no doubt that Stalin spoke with precise honesty when in his interview with Senator Pepper (published in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 2) he pointed out that Russians

> have made the greatest sacrifices of any of the Allies. They have gone without adequate food, clothing and housing during this long war. It would be suicidal for us to do anything but devote all our efforts and resources to giving the people the things they have so long done without.

Russia wants a great loan from the United States for the purposes of rebuilding, and as an earnest in proof that the money will be used for reconstruction and not for rebuilding the war machine, Stalin gives the fact that he has already demobilised nearly four million men of the Red Army. If the United States can see in Russia a business partner, the world will have peace for a generation, during which new development may occur which will prevent war later. Every sane American and Russian will agree about this, since a war between these two great power blocs could never be decisive, and could only be a battle of utter destruction, in which the cities of both nations could be destroyed by atomic bombs, but neither Power could be conquered by the other.

What then should British policy be? If we all have spheres of influence, and if Russia is not to have the right to interfere in the Mediterranean or other parts of our far-flung Empire, we had better regard Eastern Europe as Russia's zone and not meddle in an area where we have no power to effect good and much power to exacerbate relations. It is, however, our duty to raise our voices where Russian policy, ruthless in its methods and neglectful of human values, adds to the existing miseries of Europe. We are necessarily concerned, for instance, with the mass expulsion of Germans from Poland. It is not enough for the Poles or the Russians to retort that the things they are doing to the Germans are less terrible than what the Germans did to the Slavs during the whole period of occupation. Revenge is not statesmanship. Mr. Bevin, we hope, explained to Molotov that the effect of this policy must be the very reverse of that desired by the Soviet Union. Inevitably, soldiers and correspondents returning from Germany are swayed by what they see from an indiscriminate hatred of all Germans to an equally indiscriminate Slavophobia.

The Occidental belief that human beings matter; that you cannot regard children who were not born when Hitler came to power as responsible for what their rulers have done; the misery we all feel when we know that thousands of people are dying of hunger and neglect on the roadsides—these are sincere and worthy emotions that penetrate thoughout all classes in Western democracies. Moreover, on grounds of common sense and safety, it is absolutely necessary immediately to bring to an end a process which is spreading disease throughout Europe. The doctors now gravely talk of the danger of an "influenza" epidemic similar to that which killed 25 million people in Europe and Asia after the last war. Influenza in this connotation may include many diseases which cannot be isolated. Bacilli do not stop at frontiers.

Here is a matter on which indeed Britain and America may rightly protest, and couple their protest with definite practical proposals for the reconstruction of Europe—beginning with an international scheme for the Ruhr and the Rhineland. If Russia's suspicions have now gone so far that the U.S.S.R. will not co-operate, and if on the contrary they are intent on a policy which increases misery and threatens the world with pestilence, the only course open to us is to consider with the utmost realism how we on our side can build a Western Europe which can stand on its own feet and continue the traditions of our own humanitarian democracy.

On this analysis, the policy of Western Union would then be inescapable. If the Soviet Union insists on an exclusive sphere in Eastern Europe, then, not anti-Soviet sentiment, but sheer necessity would force Britain to seek a friendly association on the Western seaboard of the Continent. For *Pravda* to attack such a move as an example of anti-Soviet activity would be ludicrous. Britain must in any case seek close union with France, Scandinavia and the Low Countries because Britain is part of the Continent, bound by common economic, political and cultural ties. The main object is an economic defence against American capitalism which is busily trying to reduce Britain to the status of a satellite. In fact, all three Power groups are intriguing against each other in the Middle East—the ultimate key to power—and we are seeking a sphere within which the ancient democracies of Europe can live without being crushed between the two colossal continental powers. If some closer union were achieved on the Atlantic seaboard, democratic Socialism would regain confidence, and hope to deserve the more respectful attention of the U.S.S.R. in its efforts to cope with the problem of European disintegration. In no case could such a union be a menace to the U.S.S.R. unless it were subservient to the United States. Its main object, in our view, would be to save us from such subservience.

STATE MEDICAL SERVICE

HAVING thrown out the Willink baby with the muddied bath-water, the Government has now to beget a new plan for a State Medical Service. It is going to be a difficult job. Mr. Aneurin Bevan is re-examining the whole problem before he resumes discussions with the interested parties —the doctors, the local authorities and the voluntary hospitals. Hitherto, the most vocal opposition has come from the doctors, or, at least, from the British Medical Association. Its pressure-politics on Willink, and his appeasement of the B.M.A., wrecked the White Paper, and led to Greenwood's outspoken denunciation in the House. The B.M.A., which realised in its conferences 16 years ago that there would have to be a drastic reorganisation of the Health Services, has been fighting a clumsy rear-guard action ever since against a salaried State Medical Service. The Election showed what the public wants; and the doctors may now prove more amenable. The other two parties may be more difficult.

The White Paper was a persuasive piece of compromise all round. It burked the thorny issues. Alongside the Health Centres, specially equipped for the salaried group-doctors, it conceived doctors with separate practices operating an extended and improved panel system, as well as doctors with private practices. The sale of practices—even those publicly remunerated—was condoned "because abolition would involve great practical difficulties." (The Minister is being confronted with questions on this as soon as Parliament reassembles.) It set out to base the new service as far as possible on the existing County and County Borough Councils. Voluntary hospitals were to survive and co-operate with the publicly financed hospitals.

If the Minister of Health finds on re-examination that this is all rather untidy and, while a big improvement on things as they are, scarcely an efficient system worthy of its great purpose or fair value for the great amount of money to be spent on it, he may decide to "re-jig" the whole scheme and produce a functional, organic plan instead of this system of political checks and balances. This will mean challenging the position of the local authorities and, certainly, of the voluntary hospitals, both of which have strong support inside the Labour Movement itself.

In the development of community health services, local government has taken the lead and has done well, not only in preventive medicine, for which the Public Health Service was originally created, but in treatment through its clinics and through its hospitals. The Derating Act of 1929, in handing over the Poor Law powers and institutions to the County Councils, enabled these authorities to run municipal hospitals. The London County Council inherited 77 institutions and created out of them the largest hospital system in the world. At a cost before the war of £5½ millions a year, it did a magnificent job. Under the same powers, local authorities were permitted to appoint full-time salaried "family doctors" for the domiciliary care of those who came under Public Assistance. Under the Education Acts, the County Councils were also charged with the School Medical Service (including dentists and ophthalmists) and with that positive health measure, the feeding of schoolchildren.

But it was all haphazard, a patchwork and a gap-filling. The development was most uneven. Reactionary authorities "saved the rates." Labour authorities spent the rates. The need was greatest in the poor districts; the poor, as usual, took care of the poor. The units of local government were too small (even the L.C.C.) to provide a really comprehensive service. When the war came, an *ad hoc* system, the Emergency Medical Service, had to be created, which went in for zoning instead of conforming to council boundaries. Whatever criticism there may be of E.M.S. it was at least a recognition that a casualty service is a general and not a local concern. Comparably, the National Fire Service (now threatened by reassertion of rights of local sovereignty) was forced upon the country by the disasters of the blitz; a fire could not be left blazing (as it often was in peace-time) because it was on the other side of a borough boundary.

The White Paper tried to meet this problem by proposing joint boards combining the existing County and County Borough Councils, and grouping the local authority areas. For Scotland a "regional" solution was proposed. For the hospital and allied services "natural regions" based on the cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee and Inverness, were to be selected. The actual administration of the hospital and consultant services was to be entrusted to Joint Hospital Boards composed of representatives from the County Councils and the Town Councils. Alongside would be a Regional Hospitals Advisory Council recruited from the Joint Hospital Boards and, on parity, from the voluntary hospitals. The Secretary of State, not the local authorities as in England, was to provide the Health Centres.

In both England and Scotland the Government responsibility was to be vested in two Central Boards. A Central Medical Board would employ the general practitioners (with, in England, the local authorities coming in as a third party because they were to house them in the Health Centres) and a Central Health Services Council, attached to the Ministers, to express expert views. The status of the voluntary hospitals was recognised and preserved.

Nobody questions the fine tradition of the voluntary hospitals, but it is a fact that as charities they are played out. The Sankey Commission on the Voluntary Hospitals recognised that. The King Edward VII Fund, which has pooled the flag-days and the public charities of the London hospitals, has confessed as much in its increasing claims for subsidies from the local authorities. Except in very rare cases of well-endowed hospitals, it is estimated that over 70 per cent. of the finances of the voluntary hospitals will come from public funds. In return, if the present state of affairs is accepted, the State and the local authorities will bargain with the voluntary hospitals for so many beds to be reserved for "public" cases as against "charity" cases which will still be accepted at the discretion of the governors and, presumably, subject to the means test of the almoners.

The great teaching hospitals are the voluntary hospitals, with the exception of the British Post-Graduate Medical School which is housed in an L.C.C. hospital. Everyone agrees that as the nurseries for producing the doctors of the future and as the natural hive of the consultants the teaching hospitals must be the hubs of any joint, regional, zonal or what-have-you hospital system. So they will be drawing not only direct subsidies from public funds but research and equipment grants and educational grants. How can any plan for a State Medical Service ignore the public responsibility which must follow public money or the functional necessity for having these properly integrated into a public service? Conversely it is essential to give doctors the assurance that State employment does not mean restriction of their professional initiative by lay committees or pettifogging medical bureaucrats.

The National Health Service is one of the great advances in social history. It calls for really courageous statesmanship, not for parish pump politics or traditionalism. If the Minister finds on re-examination that the "patch-work quilt" method of fitting in local authorities and the "marriage-broker" method of bringing the public and voluntary hospitals together are as unsatisfactory as they look, then he will have to evolve a bolder plan. The State Service must then be based on the central authority of the Ministry of Health, with a large measure of devolution to *ad hoc* Regional Medical Councils. These Councils would have to deal with administration, medical discipline and the advancement of a real Health, as opposed to a narrowly conceived Sickness, service. That is, they would have to resolve the dichotomy between preventive and curative medicine. Happily, Mr. Bevan knows that behind him on the benches of the House is a new breed of M.P.s ready to support bold experiments.

RITCHIE CALDER

SIR WALTER FRANKENSTEIN

(This article from our Correspondent at the World Trade Union Conference in Paris was written before the successful formation of the new World Federation)

A BRITISH Socialist feels uncomfortable at the World Trade Union conference in Paris. The British delegation has come to be regarded by most of the smaller countries as a centre of reaction, with Sir Walter Citrine spinning mysterious webs of intrigue against the workers' dream of a World Federation. But the truth is not so sinister: it is that the thing which Sir Walter created has taken on a life of its own and got beyond his control. When he tries to make it the convenient machine he planned, he seems to others to be trying to kill it. Not that he has been outmanoeuvred by anybody. He has simply set in motion forces, the strength of which he did not suspect. Others saw what was happening, and are taking advantage of it.

When Sir Walter called the preliminary World Conference in London in February, it was his intention that it should be merely exploratory, to see whether a World Trade Union Movement of a more representative character than the International Federation of Trade Unions was a tactical possibility. But the delegates, when they arrived—and they came in numbers and variety surpassing all expectations—refused to be merely explorers. They felt themselves on a rising tide and they wanted action. Despite Sir Walter's advice, they decided to hold a new conference now —much sooner than he wanted—for the purpose of setting up a World Federation, and arranged for an Administrative Committee to prepare a draft constitution. Sir Walter's idea of a new organisation growing organically from the I.F.T.U. and the International Secretariats seemed in danger of being swept away. He used all his negotiating skill and persistence between the two conferences; but, even on the Administrative Committee, he could not get his way. He had to come to Paris with a whole series of amendments to a constitution which he himself had helped to draw up.

Other men might have yielded gracefully to the inevitable, but not Sir Walter. The result is that he has been fighting a slow retreat since the beginning, and in the course of it has come into conflict with almost all the rising new forces in the Trade Union world. At the back of it all, is the struggle between the Soviet Trade Unions and the T.U.C. for control of the great new organisation. "Power Politics," as an Indian speaker complained. But that has seldom been apparent. The overt struggle has been between Sir Walter and the new Trade Union movements of Eastern Europe; Sir Walter and the Colonial delegates; Sir Walter and M. Louis Saillant—brilliant young Frenchman, not a Communist himself but an apparently willing and certainly brilliant Communist "ally." Sir Walter's only supporters have been one or two of the countries of North-Western Europe, such as Sweden and Belgium, and the I.F.T.U. and Trade Secretariats themselves.

The most tragic aspect of the situation has been the bitter division between the T.U.C. and the Trade Union movements of India and the Colonies. Sir Walter's proposal for an

interim period, with provisional officials and administration, was a great disappointment to them. They had left London full of hope and are desperately anxious for the World Federation to be started, because they are desperately in need of the help of such a powerful body in facing their post-war problems. "The British T.U.C.," said a coloured delegate from Trinidad, "will never open its arms to the Trades Unions in the Colonies. We must look for encouragement and protection to some other body, and we look to this World Federation to give us that protection. A similar distrustful attitude towards the T.U.C. was shown, before the conference began, at a meeting of delegates from India, Ceylon, Cyprus, Palestine (Arabs), Lebanon, Gambia, Northern Rhodesia, Trinidad and Jamaica. At a time like this, when it is essential and possible for Labour Movements in the Colonies to develop, it is a matter for great regret that they should not look to the T.U.C. for friendship and help. Sir Walter made things worse by declaring that it would be fatal for the World Federation to concern itself with political matters. How, demanded Colonial delegates, could you separate politics from Trade Union affairs, when workers were living under regimes which prevented their free development?

And yet it is not a straightforward matter. If Communist power were to become dominant in the Federation, might it not use its influence with developing Trade Unions to further Soviet ends? And Soviet influence is potentially very strong, not only from the 30,000,000 of their own membership but also from the organisations in Communist-influenced countries in Eastern Europe, from the French C.G.T., now largely under Communist control, and perhaps from spreading Communist influence in the Colonies themselves. Sir Walter did his cause no good by implying that the great numbers of members claimed by the new Trade Union Movements in many countries (everybody assumed he was thinking of Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania and Poland) were possibly a fiction. It was so easy to answer, as did Mr. Ernest Thornton, Communist delegate from Australia, that their rapid growth was a matter for enthusiasm rather than suspicion. The same line was taken by M. Saillant, who has brilliantly exploited every false step by Citrine. Young, self-assured, a first-rate debater and orator, full of ambition, he is obviously going to be a force in the International Trade Union Movement. The French and Soviet Trade Unions made a shrewd choice when they decided upon him as their nominee for the General Secretaryship, in opposition to the British choice, M. Schevenels.

There are sound arguments for many of the proposals which Sir Walter Citrine put before the conference, but it is regrettable he has allowed it to appear that while everybody else is marching forward—the Soviet Unions, the French, the enthusiastic young Unions of the liberated countries, the passionate crusaders of the Colonies, even the C.I.O., which Mr. Sidney Hillman keeps with skill in the middle of the road—only the T.U.C. and its handful of old-fashioned Continental followers is holding back.

A LONDON DIARY

I EXPECTED that "Save Europe Now" would find a ready response to its appeal for a voluntary levy on rationed foodstuffs; the number of people who have written to support the idea of a Government-sponsored scheme for the collection of food or "points" has, I hear, much more than justified the expectations of its sponsors. But, on reading through some of the letters that have been sent in reply to the appeal, I am struck by the way many of them refute the charge that only the comfortable, the childless or the sentimentalists are either willing or able to spare anything from the present ration scales. More than one letter has come from a former prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp—who realises that any relief effort in Europe this winter must devote much of its resources to assisting German children. One man with five young children writes that, after living under Nazi rule in Jersey for five years, he does not wish that anyone, irrespective of nationality, should suffer from want of food, as he and his family had suffered. A soldier in Germany for the last nine months says:

> The miseries of the obviously innocent children of Germany, whose sufferings, already the greatest, threaten to become far more terrible . . . make any prolonged sense of happiness or contentment impossible.

Another, due for demobilisation, puts his services, "in any country and in any capacity," at the disposal of "Save Europe Now." "Until I saw your letters," he says, "I thought no one in England knew or cared about the appalling conditions under which countless thousands try to live in Europe to-day." Take as typical this letter of an ex-prisoner of war now in hospital:

> The suffering I have put up with for four years in Germany is nothing compared with that of some men who were prisoners with me. But each of us would willingly do anything to help the children. . . . Food is most important to get me back to health. I am willing to go without some of it to help all kiddies, even if it means another year in hospital to get me right.

Total war has not totally destroyed people's sense of human values and moral obligations.

* * *

Norwegians to whom I talked about their coming elections (polling day is October 8th) expressed much the same uncertainty about the results that the British pundits felt about our own elections. All the parties are running Resistance candidates and those who had a dubious record (including many Social Democrats who appealed for a kind of Pétain peace in 1940) are out of the political picture. The Communists, who have never yet had a seat in the Norwegian Parliament, now claim great strength in the country. Though no one thinks they will get many seats, it is possible that they may be strong enough to prevent the Socialists, who now hold 70 out of 150 seats, from getting the absolute majority for which they hope. The Peasant Party, which had a poor record in the war, is not expected to poll well except in some country districts. The Liberal Party, which had an extremely good war record, will probably hold its own as the third largest party. All the party programmes are somewhat vague, since all the Coalition parties were agreed on an interim policy. The real struggle will come later, when the Conservatives will want to end the war-time controls.

* * *

The issue of co-operation between Socialists and Communists is not yet finally settled. At least one highly-placed member in the Social Democratic Party told me that should the Communists hold the balance in the House (which is not considered likely) the Socialists would make a Coalition with them. But there is a good deal of bitterness now between the two Left parties. The rank and file of both hoped that the co-operation which they achieved in concentration camps and in the Home Front would lead to the formation of a single united party. At the last minute negotiations broke down, although the Socialists feel they made a very generous offer in guaranteeing the Communists ten seats. Their case is that the Communists admitted that their Party Convention might still have repudiated the agreement even after the Parliamentary lists were promulgated—which would have meant that the Communists would have gained their seats at the expense of the Socialists, and then, after all, fought against them in the election. Finally, at the last minute the Oslo Communist paper *Freiheten* published a violent attack on two Social Democrats who had accused Communists of betraying Socialists to the Germans during the war. I am not surprised that the Communists should have made this retort, but it was odd to wait for some weeks and then publish it at the moment when negotiations seemed likely to succeed.

Last week, I notice, Athens Radio announced that the Ministers of the Interior and Justice were drafting a special law making it an offence to issue more than one election card to any individual. This seems to confirm the charges made by several Greek politicians that a number of votes were being given to one person whilst others had found no place on the electoral register at all; and I know that E.A.M. has cited other instances in which the voting lists have been falsified. Perhaps the third postponement of the date for completion of the lists is a sign that a real effort is being made from Athens to secure fair registers. But as long as the National Guard continues to be the source of authority in the towns and countryside, and the amnesty does not extend to the large numbers of "politicals" still imprisoned, it is highly improbable that any decrees from Athens will be sufficient to secure adequate and reliable voting lists. I remember only too well the 1935 plebiscite in which the number of votes cast in some places exceeded the enfranchised population, although the Venizelists and the Left boycotted the polls. Unless registers are carefully revised and elections postponed until some time in the New Year, I cannot see how honest results can be expected.

* * *

The Home Office takes the proper view that youths should not be kept for months in local prisons waiting for space in overcrowded Borstals. They propose to remedy this scandal by the fantastic expedient of sending the boys to Dartmoor. My own knowledge of Dartmoor is confined to a single day's visit in fine weather, and it took place after the clean-up following the mutiny and Macartney's exposure of prisons. The conditions seemed rather less horrific than its reputation. But the buildings, as the Chairman of the Prison Officers' Association said last year, are only fit to be razed to the ground. It would be impossible to imagine anywhere less suitable for "reforming" lads. They need disciplined and interesting work in good surroundings, contact with their parents, no contact with "old lags," and, above all, opportunity and the belief that they are not cut off, but wanted in the world. All these conditions are reversed in the damp isolation of Dartmoor.

* * *

Another matter on which I hope the Government will be carefully questioned is the new plan for the administration of Kenya. The scheme was devised by the Caretaker Government and seems to have been taken over by Labour without change. If it had been put forward by a Conservative Government, it would have been attacked by the Labour Opposition; with Labour in power the Conservatives hope to get their way unopposed. The battle for a White dictatorship of East Africa is an old and bad story, and until now the Colonial Office has refused to allow East Africa to fall into line with the unchecked racial autocracy of South Africa. Now at last the Kenya settlers believe they have won by an administrative change, thus avoiding the risks of legislation which the House of Commons might well refuse to pass. The Colonial Office must explain why they are ready to entrust seven offices (it reminds one of Mussolini) and, in effect, the whole power of Kenya to the hands of a single planters' representative.

* * *

Mr. Attlee has made two excellent appointments. No one knows better than Mr. Francis Williams, the new Adviser to the Government on Public Relations, how to explain to the public what the Government's problems are and how it proposes to meet them. He was one of the few outstanding successes at the Ministry of Information, and is well liked in Fleet Street and beyond it. As economic adviser to Mr. Attlee, Mr. Douglas Jay has similarly added to his qualifications as a writer and economist by administrative experience in more than one Ministry during the war. He is both a Socialist and a first-class expert.

CRITIC

NOTES ON HOLLAND

As the Dakota swung in along the coast, an echo from one's pre-war consciousness suddenly returned. It is a beautiful sight, someone had reiterated, to fly low over the Dutch bulb farms in the spring. But this was the autumn, this was the aftermath of war, and staring down through the slits in the side of the aircraft, it was difficult to be sure which was the sea, which the land, flooded and ravaged when a year ago the dykes, which normally protect the island of Walcheren, were busted wide open in three crucial places by the R.A.F.

Did human beings really live here once? Harvest their crops, give birth, grow old? Somewhere beneath that apparently solid sheet of water? And then, as I peered more closely, my angle of vision changed, and I seemed to be staring now into a vast mirror, in which was reflected, not the outline of our aircraft, but the shape of farmsteads, and whole village streets, submerged and crystallised beneath the flood.

If it makes an extraordinary picture from the air, it is equally unforgettable, though rather less spectacular, from the eye-level of the human beings who lost all their possessions last winter, and now huddle together, on the nearest dry land, refugees within their own little island kingdom. You find them at Middelburg, the beauty of whose famous town hall has been only partially damaged by bombing, and in Vere, where desperate efforts are now being made to stem one of the breaches in the dyke.

In Vere I talked with a farmer who had nothing left but some photographs of the considerable holding that had been in his family for generations. They invited us into their borrowed kitchen. The wife wore the traditional white cap of the Friesländer, her husband in his dark corduroys had a face that Hals would have delighted to paint. Or call it: A Dutch Interior, 1945. What is it that the younger boy peers at so eagerly in his brother's hand, as he lounges by the door? A cigarette. And what is it in the centre of the table that the two little girls, with the prominent eyes of the half-starved, stare at with such wonder? A tin of cocoa.

The farmer, Jacobus David Gideonse, was saying: "We do not hold any grudge against the British for the dyke. It was necessary." *It was necessary.* I heard that phrase a hundred times during my visit. Even in The Hague, where there are large wastes of damage, caused not by German but by British bombing; and again, in Arnhem, where after the avalanche suddenly descended from the skies, and this pretty, harmless town became a battlefield, they had the bitterer aftermath of seeing those of their houses which were still standing stripped and pillaged. I have been to Arnhem and seen whole roads of houses without a stick of furniture between them.

So one began to understand what Total Occupation has meant for a country whose sufferings have been too little publicised, if that is the right word to use. One began to understand why there were so many gaps between the tramlines in Amsterdam—"last winter they tore up the wood blocks for fuel, and the floors of their houses, both here and in Rotterdam, even the lavatory doors"—and why, when we went to pick up a guide, for a few hours, his small son clung to the car handle, and wept bitterly. The only cars the boy had known belonged to the enemy. If such a car arrived at your door, and your father left with strangers, you never saw him again. But those were the only tears I witnessed. I heard no whining, no demanding, no expressions of self-pity: I saw no holding out of hands, even for cigarettes.

Just over the border into Germany much of the domestic loot was taken. It is still there to-day. And the Dutch ask naturally: when is it to be returned? That question and one other were constantly on their lips. Who is going to pay—especially for *Allied* damage? For instance, that farmer at Vere asked, not unreasonably, from whom would he—and all the others—receive compensation? "First they said the Germans would pay; then it was the British; now no one seems to know."

In any case, astronomical sums in a vague future mean less—so much less—than a ploughshare in your hand this very minute. The men are coming back from incarceration in Germany to find their families in districts near the Maas living in chicken-coops. They want to start rebuilding at once, and they are helpless because in whole villages the Germans have not left a single hammer behind. (On the waterfront at Rotterdam I watched a port official, with idle time on his hands, searching among the rusty rubble for nails.) While the dearth of all agricultural instruments is so acute, film "galas"—was it Charles Boyer's *Hold Back the Dawn* which I saw advertised?—are held in aid of the peasants. Admittance is with a novel coin. A tool. A spanner. A pair of pliers even. A rake.

"Is soap, then, rationed in your country?" (Their own ration, I discovered—after three years of no soap at all—is for two months one half of what we receive each month.) I got tired of answering such questions, and exasperated, too, until I came to the realisation that in the whole of Holland is not to be found a single English newspaper, review, or recently published book on sale. This, in contrast with Brussels and Paris, where the kiosks are piled high with news from England. Yet many more ordinary people in Holland speak our tongue . . . and would like to think our way still, if they only knew what way it was.

The new decree, recalling the old currency, was being received everywhere I went by all classes of the community with satisfaction, and, indeed, acclamation. The honest will have nothing to fear, while those who sought greedily to benefit by the scarcities of occupation are struck off the pay-roll at last. It is thought that there will be many prosecutions but many more secret bonfires..

You can clean up your currency, but that does not fill your shops with goods. In Jarrow, at the height of the depression, I have never forgotten asking my guide why so many shops were empty and boarded up. He looked at the young reporter with contempt for his ignorance of elementary economics. Shops are empty if pockets are empty, he said. And now the reverse side of the coin, I thought, as I walked through the square at Breda, and was almost deceived by a giant cheese—a beautiful example of modern plastic art. Only the flowers are real, the flower shops piled high with outsize blooms of gladioli, and huge waxy dahlias, possessing all the colour that the pale ghosts of passers-by lack. While the final irony was that the flowers were so cheap that everywhere we drove we saw them in the windows . . . the wide windows of the workmen's dwellings, so attractively designed that you could not designate them slums, even down by the docks of Rotterdam, even in Plaretstraat, where I spent an afternoon going from house to house with a young Red Cross doctor.

One remembers the mother, just back from hospital—"starvation made their limbs swell like dropsy" my companion said—holding up her two babies to the open window and the sun. One remembers young Johan Peperzak at No. 55, dressed in a cut-down Canadian uniform, complete with three stripes on the arm (but this wasn't a children's fancy-dress party, this was his only suit); and most of all, one will remember the family that lived on the ground floor at No. 44. To-day their living space is one room, because none of the other floors are left. So what will they burn this winter? What clothes will they wear when it is really cold, I thought, fascinated by the two little girls, in one corner, solemnly making dolls' clothes of the last scraps, as clean as their own cotton-thin, much patched dresses?

As though she could sense what was in one's mind, their mother, with a rough gesture, pulled them towards her, and showed us their bare chests. "You see, no lice, no vermin," she cried with passion and anger. "But they cannot go to school because they have no shoes, no coat. And my eldest daughter cannot take a place as servant for the same reason." In the ensuing silence my eyes went past the group to the table where, aloof and impersonal, stood yet another vase of white gladioli.

Outside in the street again, I reminded my companion of the stack of garments, collected by the Help Holland Council, that I had seen an hour before being sorted in a warehouse down by the blitzed docks. He explained that first the victims of the Allied battlefields, the refugees from the far-off flooded areas must be fitted out with *something*; and when I was not altogether convinced, he added that so far, despite all that voluntary organisations in Britain and America are doing, only ten per cent. of the immediate help needed was being received.

Ten per cent. That is a fact, checked and counterchecked. Here are some more. In Rotterdam, out of ten thousand Jews only seven hundred are left. Last winter one bulb grower alone in Haarlem sold 2,500 tons of bulbs, crocuses for coffee, daffodils and hyacinths for fodder, tulips for human beings. ("They taste like a sweet swede, and aren't bad, if fried in fat, if there is any fat.") In Amsterdam last Sunday, at the "best" restaurant, our lunch consisted of cabbage and a little thin soup. I am sorry I cannot offer you any salt, our host said, but I haven't the coupons. Automatically one looked down for a piece of bread to crumble that wasn't there . . .

Mercifully the old city has been spared much bombing, and its serene autumn loveliness was assuaging one's stomach, when suddenly there came into view a sight that is all too common to-day in liberated countries. One more hotel turned into an Allied leave centre, and there in the window, guzzling away, were a frieze of happy warriors, tackling the Sunday joint, piling their plates, and spreading several pats of butter on their bread. I know now why from time to time respectable citizens long to throw a brick through a window. What must be the feelings of those who pass that way every day and always lunch off cabbage!

As you approached the Rijks, you saw them, in a queue a quarter of a mile long it seemed, waiting in their shabby Sunday best for their meal. So patient and quiet, not wasting energy in speech, just waiting. (Did I once regard the Dutch as a plump and solid race?) At last there is space for another batch inside, and now, too tired to stand any more, they flop down on the rows of benches in the improvised gallery, where on the walls all the Rembrandts in Holland—salvaged from their hiding places in the sand-dunes—are gathered together to-day for the first time under the same roof. It is good to have that as one's final memory.

GODFREY WINN.

All publishing rights in this article have been given by the author to the HELP HOLLAND COUNCIL.

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to E. M. Thomas.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

There has been no mistaking how readers feel about George, the war dog, whose demobbing from the R.A.F. without any official word of thanks was reported last week. Dog lovers have hastened to repair the official omission and have sent personal letters to George welcoming him home.—*Sunday Pictorial.*

When a suggestion was made that officers vacate cabins in favour of elderly and sick civilians a colonel held that commissioned officers could not associate with civilians and other ranks between decks.—*News Chronicle.*

PICCADILLY ANTHOLOGY

So this is Piccadilly Circus. Kinda small, ain't it?

I shall have to 'phone the wife and say I'm detained at another conference.

It's not a part I fancy. It's not *me*, if you follow my meaning. But it is bread and butter.

Good-night, Iris! Good-night, Iris! When I say *good-night*, see, it means I'll see her to-morrow at the caff. When I say *so long, Iris*, it means I'll see her at the caff in half an hour. Unless, of course, Iris makes a break . . .

Could you do with a good watch?

It's no good accusing me, I said, of temperament. I'm only being true to my art.

And Roger? Oh, Roger, bought it. So did Wally-the-Wag. And the Champ? You heard about him, of course? Went for a Burton on D-Day. Bad show. Just you and me. Bad show, eh?

It come from Switzerland, this watch, where they make watches.

You do talk funny English, Joe, it makes ever such a change.

Bernard? Oh, he's about. Wizard job selling matches or something. Then, old Pete, he still spends most of his time in and out of hospital. Ropey Roy had twins after he got the D.S.O., and thinks he's lined up for a job as a reception clerk. Good show, very.

If I said it was a watch that come off of a dead Jerry that was split from end to end like this, you wouldn't believe me.

In Poland I would fight a duel with him.

You see, darling, it was his first night in England after four years, and we just went mad, both of us.

I'm telling you. You could put the whole of this little lot down in the middle of Times Square and still park a thousand automobiles outside of the Astor Hotel. Kinda small, that's all I'm saying.

I got it for five hundred cigarettes in Germany.

We never did crucify any peasants! We only beat them.

As a Londoner I wouldn't know, but you try those M.P.'s in white bowler hats. They know everything.

Nice to be back? It's heaven just to stand here and see the lights. Move on? What do you mean, move on?

I've got a thousand marks here. Dollars? You can have up to twenty against sterling.

I've already 'phoned the wife. I can't tell her there's another conference. There isn't even a war on.

There goes Iris doing a roaring trade.

This is England, I says, not Africa. After which she ups with the bucket and the bleedin' broom like the charge of the Light Brigade.

I don't care. It's home. It's London. It's . . .

Kinda small if you catch my meaning. And I've seen big cities all over the world.

It's a teeny bit black market, but it's terribly good. You always see Cyril there and you know how Cyril *loves* his stomach.

Yes, the desert! Do some of these chums good, that would.

Myself? Oh, everything's wizard in a way. One misses the old squadron life of course. The Boss said I'd be all right when I got the seat of my demob suitings a bit shiny. Bit of a line that: but it's damn good of him to give me the job, I suppose.

JOHN PUDNEY

HENRY IV—PART I

To the audiences of 1597 Falstaff was the most popular of Shakespeare's characters. All the contemporary quarto editions of the play advertise "the humorous conceites of Sir John Falstalffe." Now Sir John's popularity in the theatre has waned: yet the text of *Henry IV* has never been more closely studied. In the audiences at the New Theatre there will be many Eng. Lit. students primed with problems and theories and anxious to know which "interpretation" the performance brings out. Shall we see a satire on the Elizabethan gallant or a dutiful glorification of the Lancastrian dynasty? Variations on the theme of honour, or a study of Shakespeare's preoccupation with the difference between appearance and reality? And which Falstaff shall we see? G.'s picture, of the buffoon and the coward? Or the rationalist too courageously indifferent to opinion to be merely brave? The ex-soldier and warrior turned sceptic in decay (favoured by B.), or the profound philosopher, mouthpiece of Shakespeare, who has outgrown a too emotional ethic of honour? An up-to-date version of the Vice of the Morality Play, or Shakespeare's anti-Puritanism put into words? Or is Falstaff's assumption of free-thinking, on matters of chivalry and compulsory military service, a matter of deliberate conscience?

Which theory? Ten minutes after the play has started all this discriminating has vanished. All is overwhelmed in the flowing tide of plot, incident, and the acting of a play. Falstaff is part of a story, and making us laugh by telling lies, and by imitating King Henry with a cushion on his head for a crown, which he breathes on noisily to give it a polish.

Never has the difference between the acting and the reading of a Shakespeare play been more obvious, perhaps because never before have we seen Falstaff acted, though we can remember several more or less amusing impersonations of a Fat Man. Ralph Richardson plays Falstaff as fat as a Rowlandson drawing, but with all the mental and even physical lightness which Rowlandson suggests, as if those padded legs were pneumatic merely. Is his voice too light for a fat man? But we have known monstrosities who positively squeak, and it is impossible to crowd more than half Falstaff's wit into the suffocated growl usually favoured. Mr. Richardson, in fact, shows all the inconsistency of Shakespeare's great creations, so that your own particular favourite theory seems true and fifty more besides. Some actors—and Irving must have been one of them—are in some sense *closed* to the audience. On the stage Mr. Richardson creates the illusion of having one of those open personalities through which the true character shines from within, so that we think, "Ah, I can tell what you're really like, my transparent fellow." This gift well suits an interpretation of Falstaff, who, with his innocent deceptions and free pleasures, is the purest of Shakespeare's characters, yielding to temptation with such a ready grace that he seems the master, not the slave, of passion.

If Mr. Richardson seems to go back to Shakespeare's original, Mr. Olivier just as strikingly creates a new Hotspur, reminding us that Northumberland is of the Border, a soldier of Celtic shyness and taciturnity, through the impediment of whose diffidence the marvellous words break suddenly, in an unpremeditated stream—a daring and successful performance. *Feliciter audax* is, indeed, the phrase for Mr. Burrell's production. Choosing not to adopt the uninterrupted flow of the Elizabethan method, he closes each scene with a moment of dumb-show, shadowy and significant. I shall never forget Glendower, standing at the window (the actor is Harcourt Williams, who knows how to stand)—standing and staring after Hotspur as he gallops away, with the two women weeping at his feet while we know what they guess, that they will never see Hotspur again.

This virtue of bold invention has its own drawback. Just occasionally the text is swamped by the business. Occasionally a famous line passes unnoticed. A full-blooded theatrical production demands that Hal shall be played as the straightest of princely heroes, yet surely it would have been more dramatic, besides more correct, not to allow King Henry to be an older version of the same kind of thing, instead of the hard opportunist that Shakespeare suggests. The fact is that Mr. Hannen has not got it in him to be meagre or mean. So he makes the King charming and regal, even if he does clap his man on the shoulder once too often, a gesture which, when the new Vic was the dear old grubbier Vic across the water, used to evoke an equally friendly cloud of dust by way of response. One is reminded that this bold and inventive production is fitly acted by a cast the majority of which were produced by the older theatre.

STEPHEN POTTER

RADIO NOTES

"World Theatre" is the title of a new series in which the Drama Department are to produce, every fourth Monday, some acknowledged masterpiece of European dramatic literature. The series will include Chehov's *The Seagull*, Rostand's *L'Aiglon* (a very dubious masterpiece, this), *The Insect Play*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *Hamlet*. Obviously a sensible idea and capable of being considerably extended, if only the more foolish remarks of Listener Research are strenuously discounted by those who regulate the programme policy. The first of the series, the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, showed, above all, how well suited Greek drama is to radio. We all have our notion of what Desdemona, or Ophelia, or Hedda, or Hamlet, looked like, so we like to see them actually make the gestures we attribute to them in our imaginations. But who thinks of the *appearance* of Phædra or Theseus? These figures of Greek drama are not only larger than life—as all figures of tragedy must be: they approach the gods who are represented as governing their fate, but who are really no more than embodiments of their passions and aspirations. This reduces them, effectively and usefully, to the status of the purely poetical, and they become concentrated into the most subtle characteristic of human beings—the voice itself. Greek drama is a counterpoint of rhetorical voices; and it follows that the radio producer's main task is variety of tone colour—variety in absolute rightness. Val Gielgud seemed to me to have chosen his cast with much adroitness, except where the chorus was concerned. This is admittedly an almost insoluble problem to-day; the distribution of the stanzas into several voices has many enemies, but I have yet to hear a criticism of the method which convinced me. The fault last Monday lay in the monotonous pathos of the tones employed. Elsewhere the acting was well above the general level of radio drama, though I thought Gladys Young was not really inside her part. The role of the Nurse—a cross between the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* and Isolde's Brangäne—needs a very rich interpretation, because the character and its secret motives are really central to the play. Racine followed Euripides faithfully here; and if the aggregate effect of *Phèdre* is more magnificent, and more tragic, than that of the *Hippolytus* (at all events in translation), the reason surely lies in Racine's concentration on the human dilapidation of his heroine. The Phædra of Euripides has a certain innocence born of the fact that the dramatist has chosen to relieve her of some of her responsibility for her emotions and actions, by attributing them to Aphrodite herself, a procedure which inevitably attenuates the character. Miss Diana Wynyard, with her cool and beautifully modulated voice, admirably conveyed this particular kind of helplessness. Barry Morse, as Hippolytus, hit off the poor, film star character of the intolerable young man, but was sensibly less good in the full-mouthed passages. The total effect of this production was far from being what we are accustomed to think of as Greek, but that was to a large extent due to Professor Gilbert Murray's translation, the Swinburnian style of which does not lend itself at all happily to any kind of severity, transforming he woollen or linen folds of Greek apparel into pastel-shade crêpe-de-chine.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*October 7th.* Symphony Concert (2.30); Sir Max Beerbohm on Play Going (9.15); "Time for Verse" (10.38).

October 9th. "It's Your Money They're After": Employment Frauds (L.P., 7.10 p.m.).

October 10th. Rachmaninoff: Cello Sonata (1.15); Brahms Violin Concerto, and Verdi Stabat Mater and Te Deum (7.30); "So This is Man" (9.45).

October 11th. Recital—Rameau, Vaughan Williams, Debussy (3.30); "Elizabeth Fry" (6.30).

October 12th. Mozart—String Quartet in E Flat (Griller Quartet, 7 p.m.); "I fought with the Maquis" (Feature by George Millar, 8.15); New Poems (11.45).

October 13th. Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony (2.10).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

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THE RIVALS

Mr. Tyrone Guthrie has left the Vic-Wells. (So, for that matter, have Miss Joan Cross, Mr. Peter Pears and Mr. Eric Crozier. Do not the Governors owe a puzzled public some explanation of so widespread a calamity?) The loss of the producers is probably less irreparable than that of the singers, but Mr. Guthrie's production of *The Rivals* is one that the Old Vic might envy. It is rapid and brimming with life. Miss Edith Evans is gorgeous in the usually tiresome role of Mrs. Malaprop. (Noticeable, however, that the Malapropisms bring down the house!) No other living English actress so commands the stage. In a sense her power puts the play out of focus, but Mr. Morland Graham as Sir Anthony, Mr. Reginald Beckwith as Acres, Mr. Anthony Quayle as Jack, Mr. Peter Cushing as Faulkland (a subtle psychological study caught in a farce), Miss Jean Wilson as Julia, Mr. Michael Gough as Fag, Mr. Brefni O'Rourke as Sir Lucius and Miss Pauline Jameson as Lucy—all of them are outstandingly good. Indeed this is the best ensemble now to be seen in London. The delicious prose is spoken with a style that all but two members of the *Lady Windermere's Fan* cast would do well to emulate. The only failure is Miss Audrey Fildes's Lydia—and this must be blamed not on the actress but on the producer. Lydia should be all silly softness and gush, a languishing jelly of emotion, instead of which she is presented as a steely minx amused by herself. This makes nonsense of the play, which is largely a satire on the "sensibility" that overwhelmed England and France in the 1770's. (Elinor Dashwood and Emma Bovary are later Lydias.) The setting by Mr. Oliver Messel is delightful, his costumes rich and rare. Miss Evans in the last act with a hooped veil is a masterpiece. Altogether this revival is a fair treat.

SAM SMILES

THE MOVIES

"Journey Together" and "Where Do We Go From Here?" at the Odeon
"Conflict," at Warner's

There are two new films at the Odeon. *Journey Together* is a first-rate English semi-documentary; *Where Do We Go From Here?* is an American musical, idiotic as such pieces usually are. They belong to two different worlds, which the conventions of programme-making or seat-filling have brought together; as though, in a theatre, we were to see a performance of Strindberg's *Miss Julie* followed instantly by *Perchance to Dream*. Or rather the order of the plays would be reversed, with Novello leading, for the programme at the Odeon puts its nonsense first. How many playgoers would be tempted by such an arrangement? Not many, I think. But the cinema-goer has less differentiated tastes. He is far easier to get at. His appetite can (apparently) embrace both good and bad, he doesn't yet know the height of his brow. And that is, in one way, an encouragement. I should prefer for my own pleasure that cinemas were hall-marked like theatres, with the serious and the trivial divided, so that going into one lobby we shouldn't find ourselves trapped in the other; but I admit the greater possibilities of the incongruously mixed appeal. The fan who goes to see Miss Joan Leslie in Technicolor and to hear Columbus tarradiddling to his crew that

> The queen of queens
> Supplies the means

by which they are approaching America, may yet be open to impressions of a different order from *Journey Together*. May—for it is rather difficult to assess the taste that will lap up one week *Objective Burma* and the next Wellman's *Story of G.I. Joe*. Every minority movement in films has, at least, the unwilling attention of audiences to work on. This seems to me the one powerful argument in favour of the double-feature programme, otherwise so detestable: that it lets in the artist as well as the dope-pedler. Nevertheless I should need proof before I believed that no distributor would accept *Journey Together* as a first feature, and I should like to know if the M.O.I. made any attempt to have it so shown?

It belongs to the new type of documentary that has assimilated a dash of fiction. *Journey Together* gives us the story of two friends in the R.A.F., one of whom becomes a bomber pilot, while the other gravitates—as it seems to him—uneasily towards the job of navigator. The two are nicely contrasted—gentleman and player—and as they undergo the minute tests of training we get to know them very well indeed, better, in fact, than we should through the usual pretences of fiction. We know them as men on the job, and that is how they know one another. The job can go like clockwork, as it does for the natural pilot once he has got through exams, or it can be as ringed with difficulty as the procedure in a Kafka novel. The unwilling navigator beams and sulks, plods, messes about with his protractors, and when at last he is pitched into the situation of getting a damaged bomber home from Berlin, we experience agonies of apprehension. Few more thrilling or uncomfortable moments have been brought to the cinema than this sustained climax of the journey home, ending with a crashed landing in the sea. The exact detail that has distinguished every foot of the film becomes here doubly telling. One goes away with an appalling sense of danger and the responsibilities of the navigator: that is the new insight provided by *Journey Together*, and the realism by which it has been achieved can hardly be accused (the usual complaint against documentaries) of being non-committal. After *Western Approaches*, this is the best film of its kind that has been made, and it has been written, directed, acted and photographed by the R.A.F. Richard Attenborough has particular charm as the navigator, whose mistakes keep us on tenterhooks, and Mr. Edward G. Robinson journeyed here, as a tribute to the R.A.F., to give his valuable services in a small part.

Conflict, with Bogart and Greenstreet, is a well-made thriller that would be more exciting if one ignores a clue one can't help seeing.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

TWO EXHIBITIONS

As welcome and auspicious as the first swallow or the first daffodil, an exhibition of pictures from Sweden arrives to show that the winter of our discontented isolation is at an end. The English visitor to the Wildenstein Gallery is at once impressed by the prevailing gaiety of colour. Swedish painters do not paint in a fog or a drizzle, with dirt piling upon their skylights. It seems a pity that the pictures of each artist have not been grouped together. The general effect may be more pleasing as it is, but such a disposition would help one to grasp immediately each individual character. Cézanne, Van Gogh and Matisse are the most conspicuous influences. (Have Picasso and Braque no success in Sweden, or has the Selection Committee a prejudice against cubism?) Carl Kylberg, a man of nearly seventy, is, we are told, the Swedish painter most admired in his own country. He is a mystic, expressing himself in rich masses of colour and a handling that could not be broader. One would need to see a much larger number of his works in order to understand him and form any confident opinion. But the exhibition reveals one artist to whom I surrender at once and without hesitation—Ragnar Sandberg. Highly accomplished, he has learnt from Bonnard, but his vision is personal and his handling remarkably sensitive. Here in fact is a new European painter. It is perhaps significant that of the thirteen artists represented only two were born in this century, and Sandberg is one of them. The most interesting of the sculptors is Eric Grate, who works happily in two styles—one classical or Maillolesque, the other influenced by folk-art.

At the Lefevre there is a large exhibition of paintings by Mr. Ben Nicholson. His talent is conspicuously like that of his father, Sir William Nicholson—the same charm and elegance and delicacy. But the son lives in a far nastier world, and escapes from it into abstraction, rather, one hazards, as some exiles in Hollywood turn to Yogi. Whereas Sir William could enjoy the beauties of Avignon or Ronda, our odious period has confined Mr. Ben Nicholson to Cornwall. The excellence of his pictures usually varies inversely with their size. The large geometrical abstractions strike me as verging upon self-hypnosis. At best they are a hygienic or Pascalian rejection of humanity. But the small works have the charm of exquisite workmanship, of a consummate feeling for texture. They may be thought of as the equivalents, in our puritanical age, of the Renaissance crystal goblets in the Pitti or the Louis Quinze snuff-boxes in the Wallace Collection.

ROGER MARVELL

YOUTH AND AGE ON BEAULIEU RIVER, HANTS

Early sun on Beaulieu water
  Lights the undersides of oaks,
Clumps of leaves it floods and blanches
All transparent glow the branches
  Which the double sunlight soaks;
And to her craft on Beaulieu water
Clemency the General's daughter
  Pulls across with even strokes.

Schoolboy sure she is this morning;
  Soon her sharpie's rigg'd and free.
Cool beneath a garden awning
  Mrs. Fairclough sipping tea
And raising large long-distance glasses
As the little sharpie passes,
  Sighs our sailor girl to see:

Tulip figure, so appealing,
  Oval face, so serious-eyed,
Tree-roots pass'd and muddy beaches,
On to huge and lake-like reaches,
  Soft and sun-warm, see her glide,
Slacks the slim young limbs revealing,
Sun-brown arm the tiller feeling,
  Before the wind and with the tide.

Evening light will bring the water,
  Day-long sun will burst the bud,
Clemency, the General's daughter
  Will return upon the flood.
But the older woman only
Knows the ebb tide leaves her lonely.
  With the shining fields of mud.

JOHN BETJEMAN

Correspondence

WHAT BUCHENWALD MEANS

SIR,—Friends in London sent me a pamphlet entitled "What Buchenwald Really Means," by V. Gollancz. I have been in a German concentration camp twice personally, and I have been freed the second time, in 1934, only by the efforts of an English Quaker-woman, Miss Howard, who stayed in Berlin till she had succeeded in causing my release.

I do not think it is of great use to discuss whether the people who tasted life in one of Hitler's concentration camps were heroes or not. I think they were only people who did what decent people did in every country at all times; they did not deny their convictions and stood to all that had been for years of long and selfless work the scope of life for them. I will never forget the cries of my beaten comrades during the nights; but I will also never forget that these, my comrades, have stood erect and unbroken before their tormentors and that, though they were defenceless, they never failed to inspire them with respect.

I very well remember my visit to England in 1935. I have not met anybody who was not ready to give me all help he was able to give. But I do also know that very few people wanted to know anything of concentration camps at that time.

I had met this "Not-Want-to-Know" in Germany too, of course; and this confirmed me in my opinion that peoples are not so very different in their reactions towards such occurrences. I met every shade of personal behaviour in Germany; I saw low people, I saw cowards, I saw brave men and I saw decent people. I do not know if the percentage of these people in Germany was so much different from that in other countries under similar conditions; and I would rather like to abstain from such a decision, for it would suit a German badly to make it in such a deitic way. But only a man who never really

lived under these conditions can say that there were never hundreds of thousands of brave, selfless and upright men who faced every cruelty in order to hold to their convictions, and who were not only ready to give their lives for them but really gave them.

We Germans surely have to take the responsibility for all that the Hitler regime has done to the world on our shoulders, and it must be a debt of honour for us to repair all that is repairable. But nobody will be able to force us to acknowledge that we are all responsible for the Hitler regime. The Hitler regime was for most people a terrible fate which swept over them, many times more terrible for the innocent than the guilty.

Those who have looked into the eyes of Hitler's Gestapo and S.S. men, those who know what it meant to remain true and faithful, these men will never take part in judging others wantonly; they will leave this judgment to those who are not fit to pass it because they are not able to imagine under what conditions Germans had to live.

The brave words of Mr. Gollancz's booklet strengthened my hope that it will be possible to attain our aim, namely, a real and true understanding between the peoples of Europe, faster than it seemed to be possible in the first days. ERNST REUTER

Former Mayor of Magdeburg,
Former Member of the German Reichstag.

REFUGEES AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

SIR,—Few British people have, I believe, any conception of the distress and prolonged suspense caused to the few thousand "refugees from Nazi oppression" who keenly desire to become citizens of our country. Under the late Government, their anxious enquiries, and those of their British sympathisers, were met by an official attitude of blank and chilling negation. It was neither "yes" nor "no," but the tone of official replies seemed rather to imply a "no"; it seemed an echo of the old attitude of suspicion which caused the wholesale internment of aliens; which for several years debarred alien volunteers from entering Combatant Units, an echo of the blind churlishness which for years debarred alien doctors from saving British lives, and in almost every direction refused the proffered services of refugees and choked off their goodwill. Once these absurd embargoes were lifted the refugees rendered outstanding services to the war effort and to our national life; whether as soldiers, industrial workers, doctors, dentists, engineers, or in a host of other callings, their value to us has now been abundantly proved; and also their loyalty, not only to the anti-Nazi cause but to the country which gave them hospitality. The injustice and stupidity of the policies of suspicion and of jealousy can at last be seen in their true light.

I regret to say, however, that so far even the young refugee soldiers who volunteered six years ago get no encouragement when they enquire at the Home Office about naturalisation. The evil old machine goes grinding on, blindly crushing out all human values. An impression, most unfortunate for our British reputation, has grown up that we were ready in our time of urgent need to accept the efforts and sacrifices of refugee soldiers and workers, but once the crisis is over we grudge them a share in the benefits they have helped us to win. Is our prestige of no value?

Before the war "national interest" was invoked for excluding more than a limited number of refugees from our shores. Many thousands of those who could have rendered us invaluable services were obliged to give them instead to the U.S.A. or other countries. Our refusals caused many to perish in Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau . . . And during the war our ports were closed against nearly all "refugees from Nazi oppression" unless we needed them for some special service in the "national interest" as officially conceived.

But what sort of "national interest" is this which takes no account of experience, no account of proved economic, scientific and cultural advantage, no account of the most important factor of all—the *human* factor with its repercussions all over the world? The political evil should not need emphasis: it is causing disillusionment to so many individuals who had cherished faith in British "freedom," justice and humanity. Has it no effect on public opinion in those countries which open their doors to those would-be friends whom we rebuff and reject?

It is the Fascistic idea of Britain for the British *only* which inspires most of the opposition to a policy of naturalisation. Use is still made of all the old arguments of "security" or of "safeguarding employment" which have been fully disproved by experience. *National interest* is still being invoked. I submit that this conception of "national interest" is an illusion, and a very dangerous one. All our history repudiates it. Common sense ridicules it. Morality sickens at it. Any real statesmanship would not touch it. We are surely justified in believing that our Labour Government has clearer vision?

Whingate,
Peaslake, Surrey. DOROTHY F. BUXTON

DEMOB.

SIR,—In your issue dated September 8th you stated, "As for Class B releases . . . as everybody knew, the scheme had broken down." Since it seems impossible to get information from the Ministry of Labour, probably you can give the facts.

You state, further, "volunteers for Class B were not forthcoming." Can you state how men who wish to secure release under Class B can volunteer?

By almost every post I get letters from men, their wives and their former employers, asking me if I can get this carpenter, or builder, or plumber, out of the Services under the Class B scheme. The reply from the Ministry is a stock one, and goes like this:—

". . . provision has been made in Class B for the release out of turn of a limited number of men required for urgent reconstruction work, and of course carpenters (or plumbers, etc.) will be included. The selection of these men will be made not on the application of individual employers but by the Service Authorities. . . ."

After further nicely couched phrases there is then something like this:—

"It is not possible to say in advance whether —— will be offered out of turn release, but he will, of course, have precisely the same opportunity as other carpenters with the same length of service."

Meanwhile the Service man gets back to his fatigues.

Admittedly I had one letter from a soldier who had been offered release; group 22, he should be out in any case by December; he has had 4½ years overseas, and was offered a job with "no guarantee that he can be offered work near his home"—this despite the fact that his former employer, engaged on bomb damage repairs, urgently requires his services. This soldier said he preferred to wait, and I don't blame him. If the "Service Authorities" have offered release only to such men as this, then, of course, the scheme will break down. I can only think that the people concerned don't want it to work.

Of course there may be other relevant facts, and statistics which would prove another case; I only hope that the Ministers concerned are kind enough to publish such facts before the House meets again.

House of Commons. FRANK BESWICK.

U.N.R.R.A. AND YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—Mr. R. H. Crossman's article on "Why Germany Matters," published in your issue of September 22nd, makes the surprising statement that "Yugoslavia receives virtually none of the U.N.R.R.A. supplies which she desperately needs."

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JONATHAN CAPE

While it is idle to pretend that supplies for Yugoslavia, or European countries as a whole, either from U.N.R.R.A. or from any other source, are adequate to meet the pressing needs, it is well to avoid exaggeration. Up to the end of July over 94,000 tons of relief goods were lifted by U.N.R.R.A. for Yugoslavia. During August, shipments totalled nearly 100,000 tons. For September the planned shipments were 155,000 tons. By the end of September, or soon after, U.N.R.R.A. expects to have delivered nearly 6,000 lorries.

The value of U.N.R.R.A. support to Yugoslav economy has been warmly acknowledged by Marshal Tito and members of his Government.

H. R. CUMMINGS,
Director, Information Division.

U.N.R.R.A., 11 Portland Place, W.1.

[U.N.R.R.A. aid for Yugoslavia was long delayed and then disproportionately small. We are glad to know that there is now a great improvement.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

RAPE AND ASSAULT

SIR,—The columns of the *Ilford Guardian* and the *Dagenham Post* have recently contained reports of two cases of rape which occurred locally, and which have given rise to a tremendous amount of comment in the district.

In the first instance, in June of this year, a man aged 24 assaulted an 18-year-old girl. He was sentenced, at Chelmsford Assizes, to seven years penal servitude. The second case, which was given widespread publicity last month, was that of a man, also aged 24, who assaulted a child of six-and-a-half, causing her actual bodily harm and infecting her with V.D. Tried at the Old Bailey, he was sentenced to only 10 months' imprisonment.

Unless there was some feature of these cases which was not revealed to the general public, your readers must agree that there seems to have been no sense of proportion or standardisation of any kind exercised in the passing of the two sentences. In neither case, so far as I am aware, was a medical report called for.

Had the two victims been of the same age, one would have expected more uniform terms of imprisonment to be awarded, but under these widely differing circumstances, the inequality seems totally inexplicable.

It is generally recognised that a normal girl of 18 can usually be expected to defend herself against such an attack; the child, on the other hand, must have been absolutely helpless. She may be affected mentally for the rest of her life—the judge himself described the man who assaulted her as a "menace" and "a danger to society."

Widespread concern, bewilderment and indignation has been aroused in the district—particularly with regard to the light sentence received in the second case.

VALERIE BROWNING

[We have made inquiries about the 10 months' sentence for the revolting crime heard at the Old Bailey. We learn that (1) the criminal was drunk, and (2) that although he did communicate V.D. to the child, he did not "penetrate." The law attaches so much importance to this second factor that failure to penetrate reduces the charge from one of rape, for which the penalty is penal servitude, to one of "indecent assault" for which the maximum sentence is two years. The man had already been in prison for two months so that in effect he received half the maximum penalty. The law rather than its administration seems to us at fault.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

MIDDLE EAST PROBLEMS

SIR,—You wrote last week: "All that is needed in Irak, Syria and Transjordan, as in Palestine, is to restore the systems of irrigation which made this the wealthiest region of the ancient world." If this were done, you assert, these countries "could sustain on their soil a vastly greater population on a much higher standard of life." I know that sentences such as these serve as current catch-phrases, but has the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION made any independent attempt to verify them? There is a danger that the tone of your remarks and of the tendentious statements on which they are based, may lead your readers to underrate very seriously the difficulties of restoring ancient irrigation systems. It is not just a matter of opening a tap which has been closed for a long time. During the centuries that have elapsed since water last flowed fruitfully along these ancient canals, deforestation and denudation may so materially have altered the surrounding regions that the whole problem of irrigation and drainage may have to be worked out afresh. It is true that vestiges of ancient works may be incorporated in new projects, and that new canals may follow the traces of old canals; but the utilisation of ancient remains is unlikely to have an important bearing on the total cost of bringing a given area once more under cultivation.

The construction or reconstruction of irrigation systems is a matter for engineers, and until their considered professional opinion has been given I suggest that the views of publicists, economists, or archæologists should not be accepted uncritically. I therefore earnestly invite your readers to demand precise technical information from *impartial* technical sources before making final judgments. Exactly where are the regions to be irrigated anew? Where is the water to come from? What will each project cost? How many tons of produce can be grown? When all such estimates have withstood critical examination, then will be the time to ask whether local populations can be *substantially* increased, as many informed students believe, or whether they can be *vastly* increased, as the NEW STATESMAN believes.

HERBERT ADDISON

ARMY EDUCATION

SIR,—I wish I could agree with Professor Joad. But being a soldier in the Middle East with nothing at all to occupy any of my time, I can only assume he got his information from official channels, or that he was lucky enough to hear of an exceptional unit.

I have been in M.E. eight months. During this period I have had no A.B.C.A. periods, no education in Army time, and only one B.W.P. period. I believe my case is not exceptional. There is an educational centre run by a capable and enthusiastic staff which has been ignored or by-passed by those who run our lives. Correspondence courses are available, and, not being subject to the whims of local commanders, are given air mail priority. Pre-vocational training is provided in Army trades like workshops and bakeries, but academic courses available have a ridiculously small number of vacancies. Assuredly the Army could do better.

Causes of lethargy include the weather, and the fact that senior officers and N.C.O.'s are often regular soldiers with no time for other than strictly military training. But the standing of education officers has a good deal to do with it. Our divisional education officer is only a captain—how can he enforce regulations on a brigadier or Lt.-Col.? Give him the status of a C.O., for that is what he is, and the mythical six or seven hours a week spent on educational subjects will become a reality.

SIGNALMAN
M.E.F. (Palestine).

FAMILY ALLOWANCE ACT

SIR,—Your editorial comment in your issue of the 8th instant and Mr. C. W. W. Greenidge's letter in your issue of the 15th instant both miss the whole point of Section 24 (1) of the Family Allowances Act, 1945, which is to provide that there should be a residence as well as a nationality test in the case of parents who are not British subjects born in the United Kingdom. The actual test is to be prescribed in Ministerial regulations under Section 24 (i) (*b*), but it is quite wrong to talk as if there was no provision for any such regulations; even alien parents' children will qualify if the parents fulfil certain residence requirements, and a Ministerial assurance has been given to Parliament to that effect.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE age of Louis XIV was the age, in France, of the aristocratic writers, of de Retz and Hamilton, of St. Simon, and La Rochefoucauld; urbane and polished authors, illuminating, by their lucid memoirs and sceptical aphorisms, the politics which they had known and left. England is poorer in this class of writers, and for good reason. The French aristocracy had tasted power, and been defeated; it was in a long and opulent retirement that those brilliant memoirs were written, that Attic style perfected. But while the French nobility was being driven from politics to the *salon*, the English was busy ensuring its long tenure of power; improving estates, pushing commerce, dominating the provinces, packing legislatures, and shuffling kings. As a class, it had no time for the pen. Only its casualties turned to literature: Clarendon, whose great *History* was written in exile; Bolingbroke, whose too bright career fizzled out in long banishment and the *Patriot King*.

To this generalisation there is at least one important exception. George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, was the English la Rochefoucauld. His *Maxims* have the same dry, sceptical flavour, the same deadly penetration:

> Generally speaking, a trowel is a more effectual instrument than a pencil for flattery.
>
> A man had as good go to bed to a Razor, as to be intimate with a foolish friend.
>
> When a Prince trusteth a man with a dangerous secret, he would not be sorry to hear the bell toll for him.
>
> Men who borrow their opinions can never repay their debts.
>
> It is flattering some men to endure them.

But unlike La Rochefoucauld, Halifax was consistently successful in politics. His writings were the fruit, not of failure and disgrace, but of a bold and dangerous political career. In consequence they are few; but they are also untinged by the bitterness of disappointment. If he saw through the vulgar charms of power, it was not with envy, as unattainable, nor with disgust, as sour; it was with the sane intellectual judgment of one who has known and valued it at its proper estimation:

> The government of the world is a great thing; but it is a very coarse one, too, compared with the fineness of speculative knowledge.

It is this intellectual temper, exercised successfully in an age of unscrupulous politics, that makes the career of Halifax at once so consistent and so distinguished. His contemporaries thought differently. To them he was an enigma. His experience, his politics, his values were different from theirs. By birth a Cavalier (he was the nephew of Strafford), he had been saved by the Civil War from a conventional education. His great house gutted, his family lost or scattered, he had spent his youth wandering abroad, in France and Italy; not a complacent aristocrat on the Grand Tour, nor a penniless *émigré* following an exiled court, but a free observer of international struggles and revolutionary politics. In France he had not only fallen in love with the works of Montaigne; he had seen the real nature of aristocratic faction. And when he returned to England, not (as so many Royalists) to faded splendour and confiscated estates, but to increased opulence and prospects of power, he had already shed many illusions in which older exiles had only been confirmed. From this vantage-point of wealth and experience, he intervened continually in the vertiginous politics of the Restoration. His interventions seemed often random, and his enemies called him a Trimmer. By another bold intervention, he appropriated the term, and in his most famous pamphlet, *The Character of a Trimmer*, he vindicated both his politics and his consistency:

> This innocent word *Trimmer* signifieth no more than this, That if Men are together in a Boat, and one part of the Company would weigh it down on one side, another would make it lean as much to the contrary; it happeneth there is a third Opinion of those, who conceive it would do as well, if the Boat went even, without endangering the Passengers. Now 'tis hard to imagine by what Figure in Language, or by what Rule in Sense, this cometh to be a Fault, and it is much more Wonder it should be thought a Heresy.

Halifax's interventions in politics well illustrated his thesis: they were always bold, and generally decisive. His friends thought him imprudent, his enemies irresponsible. He could be unscrupulous. He told Temple that whether the Popish Plot were true or false, it must be handled as true, and threatened that "unless he would concur in points so necessary to the People's satisfaction, he would brand him everywhere as a papist." But when the Whigs used the Plot as an excuse to alter the succession, Halifax again intervened, this time on the other side. Alone, or almost alone, he opposed the majority in the House of Lords. Swords were drawn around him, and he was threatened with death; but at the end of the day his oratory had prevailed, and the Whigs, unable to exclude the Heir Apparent, sought vainly to exclude his champion. A few years later, it was again his intervention (this time literary, with his *Letter to a Dissenter*) that was decisive in ruining the plausible schemes of James II. Throughout the complicated history of the Revolution, he acted with the same conspicuous independence, made more hazardous by his incautious wit. When some zealous but unimportant grandees applied for high offices in reward for their services, "I remember to have read in history," replied the caustic nobleman, "that Rome was saved by geese; but I do not remember that those geese were made consuls." Applicants are not deterred from application by such rejoinders: but next time they apply elsewhere.

A few contemporaries, more inquisitive, or less sensitive, than the rest, risking such shafts, sought to understand that enigmatic personality. They were not very successful. Since he despised rank, why, asked the pertinacious but pedestrian Bishop Burnet, did he accumulate titles? And was he really, as was generally believed, "a bold and determined atheist"? But Halifax, who "was never better pleased than when he was turning Bishop Burnet and his politics into ridicule," gave no satisfaction on these important points. He was a Christian in submission, he said; "he believed as much as he could, and he hoped that God would not lay it to his charge if he could not digest iron, as an ostrich did, nor take into his belief things that must burst him." Not perhaps a very satisfactory apologia in the eyes of those High-Churchmen whose elastic credulity and obsequious politics he loved to satirise, those "silken divines who, one would think, do practise to bow at the altar only to learn to make the better legs at court." His private aphorisms were even less orthodox:

> The people would not believe in God at all, if they were not permitted to believe wrong in Him.
>
> Men must be saved in this world by their lack of faith.

Courageous intervention in times of crisis, independence of party loyalties, a pungent wit—these are excellent qualities, but without an intellectual consistency and a political purpose they cannot be claimed as virtues; and it was precisely Halifax's consistency and serious purpose that his contemporaries were least qualified to understand. While Whig and Tory fought their often irrelevant struggles over often factious issues, Halifax was one of the few Englishmen, indeed Europeans, who from the start had seen and apprehended the growing power and insatiable ambition of Louis XIV. It was once supposed, and is by some still believed, that the seventeenth-century Whigs were the party of liberty and national resistance. It is a vain and desperate supposition. Such liberties as were then attained were the direct achievement of neither Whigs nor Tories, but the consequence of their often deadlocks, their rare agreements. As for national resistance, if the Stuarts were content to be Louis's satellites, the Whigs (even their canonised martyrs) competed to be his pensioners. Imbecility in foreign affairs was no more a monopoly of one party under the Stuarts than under Baldwin and Chamberlain. Then, as later, the real issues were seen, and faced, not by parties, but by individuals: by the Dutch William, by the Austrian Lisola, by the Englishmen Temple and Halifax. "The greatness of France," protested Halifax, "has made all old politics useless"; but old politics have a fatal fascination, especially for old politicians.

Two characteristics, both equally rare in his time, determined Halifax in this policy. They are the same characteristics which inspire his writings: a burning patriotism, and an intellectual contempt for mere power. When the Trimmer looked abroad, to Versailles and Marly, he saw only a vain creature "grazing among his flatterers and receiving their false worship," "blown up into an ambitious dropsy," "not only an incumbrance, but a common nuisance to mankind." "The King of France," he wrote in 1680, when Louis was at the zenith of his power, "hath great pleasure to see how all the world trembleth under him, for I suppose it is satisfaction suitable to his heroick mind; but for my own particular, was I in his place, I could find out a hundred things that would please me more than to keep Flanders and Germany from sleeping for fear of him." And when he looked at England, he found "a smell in our native earth better than all the perfumes of the East." The most eloquent, the most anthologised passage in his works describes the Trimmer's idolatry for the earth of England, how "he would sooner die than see a Spire of English Grass trampled down by a foreign Trespasser."

Clearly Halifax's patriotism was no abstract emotion. He was a great aristocrat, a great proprietor; and the fragrant land which he would defend against intrusive trespassers was an extension of his own Nottinghamshire estate, of Rufford Abbey, now enlarged and restored. In the dust of London, in the intervals of politics, his mind reverted instinctively to Rufford, to his plantings and prunings, his improvements and conversions. In his letters to his younger brother (a delightful correspondence, the image of a delightful relationship), among the variety of gossip and politics, among the details of those nine-per cent. annuities in which he so successfully traded (and in which John Churchill so successfully invested), "poor old Rufford" is the constantly recurring theme. "If I had my choice free," he wrote from Windsor, "I should prefer being there before this place with all its glory." "Your retreat to Rufford," echoed Henry Savile, from the court of Louis XIV, "I do not only approve of, but envy more than all the places and dignities any court upon earth can give." But like all who combine a love of the country with intellectual or political interests, Halifax found that one had often to be sacrificed to the other, and it was Rufford that was sacrificed. "Content to the mind," he once wrote, "is like moss to a tree: it binds up so as to stop its growth"; and at Rufford he was too contented. Hence those nostalgic phrases, which his brother sometimes returned with mockery: "when a lover is absent by his own choice, it is a sign of a very moderate passion"; if the monks were to return and reclaim their abbey, it would be no more than a just judgment on its owner, who did not spend eight months of the twelve "in that Paradise of the whole North (if Paradise can lie northward)." But in truth there was no pretence in Halifax's love of the country:

> Poor old Rufford mourneth that she could not see you. Now she hath her best clothes on, she hath little to brag of, yet she saith her flies are harmless, and the air is clear; and if it was possible for a statesman to love ease and quiet and silence you would rather enjoy them with bilberries than eat melons in the crowd and dust of a wandering court.
>
> So I may at the same time lament for my own sake, and congratulate for yours (he wrote to his son-in-law) that you are returned to your state of happiness, where your birds have no doubt made a new tune to bid you welcome, and your flowers strew you with your perfumes, to cleanse you from

any remainder of London air which may yet hang about you.

Il n'y point de déguisement qui puisse longtemps cacher l'amour où il est, ni le feindre où il n'est pas, says Halifax's French counterpart; and this is not the language of affectation. It is precisely because Halifax (unlike La Rochefoucauld) had honest political aims and humane private enthusiasms; because he could write his delightful and sympathetic *Advice to a Daughter*, and his indulgent, though penetrating *Character of Charles II*, that we can freely relish his dry and sceptical *Maxims*. Lacking the bitterness of personal frustration, his writings are always contemporary. His life had not been a failure: he lived to see, if not the victory, at least the solidity of the Grand Alliance, and though his last days were spent in retirement, there was consolation in the parting compliment of William III, that usually ungracious monarch: "The King said, he was still a Trimmer, and would continue so."

H. R. TREVOR-ROPER

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

Road to Rome. By CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Alan Moorehead, A. B. Austin, Alexander Clifford and Christopher Buckley covered the Mediterranean almost as a team. Unlike the ruck of sports reporters turned military experts, who sit at Supreme Headquarters typing out the remarks of the military spokesmen, they were all of them born writers, determined to see things for themselves and able to turn out not only first-rate despatches, but first-rate books. Moorehead's trilogy is already a standard work. Austin's description of the dreary winter months in Tunisia—he was killed, alas, in Italy—is the most intimate picture of British troops in action which I have read. Now comes Christopher Buckley's *Road to Rome*—not as masterly as Moorehead, not as tender as Austin, but filled with the romantic zest of the idealist who can never quite recapture in the full daylight of the Anglo-American offensive the ecstasy of Spain before the dawn.

In the Sicilian campaign Mr. Buckley has a subject exactly suited to his talents, a bizarre blend of military operations and politics. He was one of the very few reporters to take part in the landings, the first amphibious attack on enemy territory. This was the great trial of our capacity to storm the fortress of Europe—or so we all supposed. But then came the delicious, the intoxicating anticlimax, beaches unmined, pill-boxes deserted, an Italian army melting away as fast as it could into civilian clothes, and finally, on that first hot summer day in Hitler's Europe, a toast by the Fascist Mayor to Winston Churchill.

Mr. Buckley confines himself to the things which he saw with his own eyes and his own reactions to them. He speaks for the soldiers of the Eighth Army, with whom he served, reflecting faithfully their changing moods and resisting the temptation to be wise after the event. As he himself observes, he does less than justice to the Americans, and, I would add, to the French, whose astonishing feats in impassable mountains were a major factor in the break-through to Rome. These limitations give an added authenticity to his writing, reminding us of the blinkers which keep the eyes even of an army staff strictly on the road ahead. The strategical and political why and wherefore of a campaign remain an exasperating mystery to the modern army, a subject for endless speculation.

This was true in a very special sense of the Italian campaign. Within five hours of the landings in Sicily, it was obvious that Italian Fascism had collapsed, at a time when there were only a handful of German divisions in Italy and the Balkans. The back door to Germany was wide open, and the Italians, sick of war and eager for liberation, were beckoning us in. Yet six months after D-day in Sicily we were locked in that ghastly struggle at Cassino, beating our heads against a mountain wall. How was it possible? What had gone wrong?

Mr. Buckley has fortunately preserved a vivid memory of the first critical moment, the fall of Mussolini:

> The day that the news broke (we did not officially hear of it until July 26th) I drove into the neighbouring town of Lentini just before seven o'clock in the evening to hear the British commentary on the situation. Every evening at seven o'clock the war news was broadcast by means of a loudspeaker from the Town Hall, which formed one side of the main square. It was a social event, *the* social event of the day in Lentini, and on these warm summer evenings the bulk of the population were in the habit of gathering in the square or sitting at the little café tables. That Monday evening there was an atmosphere of pleasant expectancy.
>
> The loudspeaker began to croak—it was speaking in English—that the town of Lentini was out of bounds to British troops; it repeated the information in Italian. One could not help feeling that on such a night as this the customary ban might have been raised. Surely, if ever, it was a night when Saturnalia, the old full-blooded Roman Saturnalia, would have been justified. But one stifled down this impious hope and strained for the news, the real news.
>
> We got it.
>
> "In the plain of Catania," began the announcer, "German resistance continues tenaciously."
>
> We gasped.
>
> The greatest event in modern Italian history had just occurred. In every town in Sicily the people had gathered to hear the British account of the fall of Mussolini, the British comment on the *débâcle* of Fascism, and they were told of tenacious resistance in the plain of Catania. Just that!
>
> Three or four more items of news from the Sicilian front followed, and then the bald announcement that the "head of the Government, Benito Mussolini, had resigned and had been succeeded by Marshal Badoglio." There followed two or three minutes of press comment of a not very electrifying nature from the London dailies.
>
> So I stumped off to join my colleagues and retail to them the latest masterpiece of Britain's "psychological warfare." Several of us wrote pieces that night commenting more or less acidly on the handling of the news in Lentini.
>
> We need not have troubled. They were not allowed to pass the censors.

How could a correspondent realise that this news bulletin was not an aberration of a local Amgot official, but a singularly faithful fulfilment of the directive from London and Washington? That the politicians, thousands of miles away, were quite upset by the refusal of the Italians to conduct themselves properly as Fascist enemies? That Italian anti-Fascism, posing as it did the problem of the monarchy and revolution, was regarded not as an ally but as an embarrassment which disturbed our well-laid plans? We had decided to smash the back door down and to fight our way in. We carried the plan out, despite the Italians.

Mr. Buckley's description of the Italian armistice and the Salerno landing has the same air of baffled dismay. He records faithfully the soldier's anticipation of an easy march to the Po. He and his comrades of the Eighth Army could not know that, in the weeks between the planning of the operation and D-day, the Germans had seized the initiative and transformed the balance of power. The armistice was desperately needed by General Alexander, not to complete the liberation of Italy and the Balkans, but to stave off almost certain disaster on the beaches. Three Anglo-American divisions, almost out of range of fighter cover, would face five and possibly more German divisions, and, for reasons of high policy, there were no landing craft for diversionary landings farther north. He could not know that the optimistic announcements which accompanied the news of the armistice and the landing were propaganda deliberately designed to cover up our own weakness and to put sufficient heart into the Italians to make them embarrass the German communications just sufficiently for our troops to get ashore and stay there. The Eighth Army—like the general public—knew nothing of such things. It slogged on, in a fog of bewilderment, up the merciless backbone of Italy.

Some time a true assessment of the Italian campaign will have to be made. In that assessment it will, I believe, be found that great military skill and courage were largely wasted owing to political blindness—and possibly worse than blindness. For a few weeks, in that summer of 1943, the back door of Europe was wide open. The Churchill strategy might have won the war outright and saved Europe from a year of brutal destruction had the liberation of the peoples of Europe been the single guiding principle of Anglo-American policy. But it was not. Mr. Churchill's monarchism proved the undoing of his strategy. War, after all, is only a continuation of policy.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A DESPOT

In Search of Two Characters. By DORMER CRESTON. *Macmillan.* 18*s.*

The two characters are Napoleon and his son, "l'Aiglon." The book, its gifted author explains, is not a life of Napoleon but "an exploration into his character, an attempt to trace his reaction to various emotional pressures." The result is a work that deserves to be popular. Miss Creston is on occasion licentious in her syntax; she has picked up from some low writer the habit of spelling "on to" as one word; and she can be too "poetical"—at least, for my taste. Otherwise, her writing is uncommonly pleasant. I notice one odd inaccuracy: Miss Creston has confused the Princess Lieven with the Duchesse de Dino.

I am greatly struck by Miss Creston's shrewdness in assessing character. Queen Hortense, a woman of exceptional charm, has been taken, I fancy, too completely at her own very high valuation. But the book most usefully exposes the calumnies upon Sir Hudson Lowe which Napoleon has successfully passed off upon the English from Sir Walter Scott to Lord Rosebery—a masterpiece of propaganda that Goebbels might have envied. It is arguable that the British Government, and, in particular, Lord Bathurst, showed pettiness in some details. Lowe, moreover, was not a man of the world; and for this reason, as Wellington pointed out, was suspicious. But the Hundred Days had cost the lives of many thousands, and it was right to take every precaution against another escape. One wonders why Lowe's representatives had to dodge about trying to make sure Napoleon was still there. Should he not have been obliged to receive an emissary every day? I am not convinced that the indulgence shown to Napoleon by English historians is as "generous" as we pretend. Has it not often been said that it is safer to be an enemy of England than a friend? And our cult of Napoleon may well be a subtle form of self-flattery. We like to overpraise him, as a *torero* likes to exaggerate the spirit of a bull that he has mastered.

I suppose that there is more evidence about Napoleon than about any other figure in history. Miss Creston's chief difficulty must have been to decide from where in this prodigious quarry she should take her material. She says that she has deliberately avoided as far as possible the high road of Napoleonic history and has instead pushed her way down the little bypaths. Personal relations rather than strategy, diplomacy or administration are her chief concern. But no student of Napoleon's character can afford to pass in silence, as she does, the 19 Brumaire, when the great man lost his nerve and his fabulous career was saved only by the intervention of Lucien.

Every writer about Napoleon tends to explain him by concentrating upon one facet of his character—Taine, for instance, presents him as an Italian *condottiere*. An uneasy parvenu snobbery is the characteristic that Miss Creston (following Mme. de Staël) chiefly emphasises. She insists justly on the ineffaceable effects of his humiliations when, a charity-boy from a savage outpost, he was thrown at Brienne among rich and better-bred cadets. She quotes his wonderful remark to Talleyrand:

> You are the nephew of the Archbishop of Rheims . . . I, too, have an uncle, who is an archdeacon in Corsica. He brought me up. I

Corsica, you know, an archdeacon is the same as a bishop in France.

"You know"—how beautifully these two little words betray the speaker's lack of confidence in his naive assertion! Miss Creston shows how in Talleyrand, as later in the far less aristocratic Las Cases, Napoleon was enchanted by the aroma of the *ancien régime*. He refused to become—what Holland House deludedly thought him—the supreme champion of liberalism. On the other hand he failed to adopt the standards, or even the demeanour, of the royal caste into which he married. He could never preserve for long so much as the surface of good breeding: "*Quel dommage qu'un si grand homme soit si mal élevé!*" Talleyrand's verdict stands.

Thus Napoleon fell between two stools, and emerges as the prototype of our totalitarian dictators. Conscription, utter mendacity in propaganda, an ubiquitous secret police, complete control of the press and all publishing, intolerance of the mildest opposition—all the stigmata are there. As Ferrero points out in his posthumous book *Pouvoirs*, the successful revolutionary has to inspire fear, because he feels fear—lacking that prescriptive right which commands the assent of the governed. Miss Creston quotes a little-known conversation at St. Helena, reported by a Colonel Keating. The Emperor was talking about the stupidity of the old legitimate monarchs:

> The less they wish to grant liberty to their subjects, the more they must speak to them about it. I do not wish it any more than they, you may be sure . . . It is necessary one should always talk of liberty, equality, justice and disinterestedness, and never grant any liberty whatever. No change of system is required but only a change of language, and, provided we talk to the people of liberty and equality, I answer for it that they may easily be oppressed and made to lay down their last farthing, without being tempted to rise in insurrection or feeling really any discontent.

Might not this come from Mr. Orwell's *Animal Farm*? One understands why he calls his pig "Napoleon."

You may think that if he could see his modern successors, Napoleon would, like Clive, be astonished by his own moderation. But in fact he went as far as he dared. The conscience of Europe had not grown its present toughness. In the eighteenth century Voltaire had made the Continent resound with the wrongs of a Calas—had even exacted restitution from the absolute monarchy of Lewis the Fifteenth. We have come to count Calases by the million, to take them for granted, and not to mention them unless we happen to be at war with their oppressors.

One of Napoleon's most significant remarks is reported by Mme de Staël's son, Auguste. She longed to leave her native Switzerland and to live again in France. (This in itself is a staggering tribute to the mildness of the Napoleonic regime. Those who have written against modern dictatorships have shown no such eagerness to put themselves within reach of the despot's police.) Her request was refused. "Your mother," Napoleon said, "is very witty. If she came to Paris, she wouldn't be able to help making jokes. I take everything seriously."

"*Moi, je prend tout au sérieux.*" Napoleon was without humour because he was without humanity. Though merciless, he was not even vindictive. Miss Creston blames Napoleon's unrelieved egotism upon his disillusionment with Josephine. But did he ever perform one disinterested act? Was there ever a time when he recognised that anyone except himself had rights? He had the solipsism so usual in murderers. He cared for nobody except his family: he respected nobody at all. Such was his contempt for men that he thought he could display it without exciting effective resentment. When Talleyrand proved that this was a mistake, he was surprised, but not shocked. Reading the panegyrics heaped upon this monster by posterity, one feels gloomier than ever about the human race. Can we achieve freedom, when we are so entranced by its enemies?

I have said nothing about Miss Creston's second "character," because he remains so dim a figure, interesting only by his situation. One is thankful that the Second Napoleon never reached the Throne: France suffered enough from the First and the Third.

Miss Creston's book goes to support the view that women are usually better judges of character than men, for within the limits she has chosen I know of no more acute modern estimate of Napoleon's character. RAYMOND MORTIMER

MORE NEW YORKER

Parm Me. By ARTHUR KOBER. With illustrations by HOFF. *Constable.* 10s.

The Thurber Carnival. Written and illustrated by JAMES THURBER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10s. 6*d.*

To the English reader in whom a habit of humour has been implanted like cricket or bitter-drinking it must seem always carnival in New York. Ours is a campaigning humour that cuts down panics and pulls us through war and peace, but it isn't especially funny. It is hardly meant to be; it keeps a ball rolling and it looks resolutely on the bright side. I need not emphasise the shortcomings of English music-hails and light journalism, because that is a joke even we admit against ourselves: when we have wanted something really funny we have looked for a Marx Brothers film, a Bob Hope programme, or copy of the *New Yorker*. They thrive on an enviable freedom, an absence of vested topics. The *New Yorker*, particularly, when a copy or two has come our way, must have seemed almost irritatingly bright and remote from events. And while I don't think I could have stood the *New Yorker* week after week during the war, its writers undoubtedly provided us with the funniest books written in that time. Thurber goes without saying; Bob Hope is first class, though too chromium-plated for my liking; my preferences are for the regional over the cosmopolitan; I enjoy the writer who transfers to my plate a whole new slab of unassimilated manners. The last book I met of this kind was a delightfully feckless impression of Filipinos called *The Laughter of My Father*, and now Mr. Arthur Kober's *Parm Me* takes us into the thick of Yiddish family life in the Bronx. No family life, I imagine, could be thicker.

This is how the Grosses behave and talk in their Bronx apartment with the flaking plaster (one soon picks up the idiom):

> Pa was going home and was bringing a visitor. Mrs. Gross heard them both enter and came rushing into the living-room, followed by Bella. Pa's guest was whimpering.
>
> "Look what I got—a s'prize!" Pa, smiling broadly, indicated the visitor. "A duggie!"
>
> Bella stared in amazement at the animal, a somewhat frightened, baleful-eyed mongrel. "Fa heaven's sakes," was all she could say.
>
> Ma Gross glanced at the unhappy dog and then at her husband, who beamed with proprietorship. She couldn't find the proper words to express what she wanted to say, and stood there gulping. Finally she managed to speak, pausing significantly after each word. "'Take quick the dug outside!"
>
> Mr. Gross, deeply wounded, tried to explain. "He follet me home from sobway, the duggie. He don't belong to nobody, so is awright we should keep the duggie here in house."
>
> "Dope! You lost maybe by you the head?" Mrs. Gross had at last found her tongue. "Who needs here in house a dug? I need a dug in house like I need a hole in head. I need a hole in head?" she asked rhetorically.

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Pa was somewhat taken aback by this outburst. "Look at Mrs. Levine," he said apologetically. "Mrs. Levine, she got in house a cat."

"So if Mrs. Levine got a huss'n buggy in house, I must have in house a huss'n buggy, too?" she retorted. "Mrs. Levine, he says!"

Pa Gross not only brings home mongrels, but trails his braces when there are visitors and makes bad bargains with the landlord and reads the papers instead of listening, and raises the mirage of a lottery ticket and one day gets his moustache trimmed down to a smudge. The interchanges on these subjects are delightedly heated, and if Pa makes all the mistakes and goes on contentedly making them, Ma gets the better of it in words. Her diatribe on movies is one I shall treasure:

> "Next time" (begins Mr. Gross) "I want to spend a couple minutes bime movies, I can go by myself."
>
> "Now, Father, is that nice?" asked Bella. "Mother just happened to be tired, that's all."
>
> "Tired-shmired," said Mrs. Gross. "Fomm the pickshas I'm tired. All the movies, the same thing. So a boy sees awready a girl, so right away he kissed the girl bime face. So what should the girl do? So she kissed him back bime face. Nothing but kissing here and kissing there. *Feh!* This monkey business I don't like."

The only other member of the family is daughter Bella; she's stuck-up, she lives between the Awfice and the Bunch, she wants to get married, but doesn't want yet to throw herself away. Her idea of class imparts a dreadful improvement to the family speech tradition, and in the evenings she and her friends meet to discuss one another's entanglements in terms of a debating society. Perhaps the ripest of her adventures is when she is busily getting-off on a bus-top and wanting to raise the affair to an altogether higher plane. Once I had learnt how to read *Parm Me* I found it continuously funny, although reading it aloud —which the publisher recommends—is far beyond my powers.

The new Thurber, 364 pages long, is not quite an omnibus, but a good deal more than a selection. Most of what one remembers is here, including *My Life and Hard Times*, complete, and there are six pieces "hitherto unpublished in book form." They are all good and my favourite among them is "The Secret Life of James Thurber," a series of digs at *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali*, and a new slice of autobiography. Needless to say, he has devised the perfect sentence to demolish Dali and establish Thurber:

> Let me be the first to admit that the naked truth about me is to the naked truth about Salvador Dali as an old ukelele in the attic is to a piano in a tree, and I mean a piano with breasts.

Since most of the books from which *The Thurber Carnival* has been compiled are still unobtainable in this country here is a wonderful bargain at half a guinea. G. W. STONIER

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS, 3s. per line (average 6 words) per insertion. Box numbers, 1s. extra. Prepayment essential. Press Tuesday early insertion not guaranteed.

THE WINCHESTER BIBLE

The Artists of the Winchester Bible. With an introduction by WALTER OAKESHOTT. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

Many educated people are now of the opinion that the early nineteenth century was the Golden Age of British painting. It is less generally recognised that our manuscript illuminations of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were unsurpassed anywhere on the Continent of Europe. We tend to be as cagey about our artistic inheritance from the Middle Ages as we are about our human virtues. Continental miniature painting of the time has been extensively quarried but the most elementary problems posed by our own manuscripts still remain to be settled before a true assessment of their value can be undertaken. Messrs. Faber and Faber have earned our gratitude by producing at a reasonable price this excellent volume of forty-four reproductions from the miniatures of the great twelfth-century Bible in the Library of Winchester Cathedral. The illustrations could hardly be improved though one small protest must be made against the enlargement (Pl. VIII) of a detail from an initial to Ecclesiasticus which gives to the lower half of a figure of Wisdom a quite fortuitous resemblance to Rouault. Walter Oakeshott's introduction is evidently the outcome of many years of scrupulous research; and those who are sensitive to the quality of book production will take pleasure in the very act of holding this volume in their hands.

Mr. Oakeshott convincingly assigns the illuminations to certain artists for whom he invents names—there appear to have been at least six major hands as well as a number of assistants—and has worked out for them some sort of chronological sequence. All within the pages of this single manuscript, he is able to demonstrate the slow evolution from Romanesque through westernised Byzantinism to the early lyrical Gothic style. How false is the prevalent notion that Gothic forms sprang suddenly into bloom out of a decaying Romanesque, as though someone had declared "let's try pointed arches for a change!" The transition from one form to the next, as anyone studying these reproductions can see for himself, is barely perceptible, depending as it does on tiny changes in ways of living and thought. Though the *Bible* occupied the working hours of at least two generations of artists and scribes and even then (about A.D. 1220) still remained unfinished, the predominant impression is one of unbroken continuity. Most interesting in this connection are the initials for the general design of which the Romanesque illuminators were responsible but which were completed by a later generation working under the influence of the Byzantine mosaicists of the Mediterranean. So intriguing are these and other problems that the reader cannot help regretting the omission of a selected bibliography. It is a pity also that limitations of space prevented the author from discussing the extent to which changes in the calligraphy of the text can be made to link up with the evolution of the style of the illuminations. BENEDICT NICOLSON

Oliver Cromwell and Abraham Lincoln. By ISAAC FOOT. *Simpkin Marshall.* 2s. 6d.

This lecture consists of a comparison between Oliver Cromwell and Abraham Lincoln. They trod paths curiously parallel, but what is most striking is a parallelism of language, explicable enough had Lincoln studied Cromwell, but Mr. Foot tells us that it is known that he did not. For example, one of the most important of Lincoln's speeches was built up round the text: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Two centuries earlier Cromwell had made an impassioned appeal to the nation to come to a settlement: "without it, it is like a house, and much worse than a house, divided against itself; it cannot stand without settlement." But while Lincoln's speeches were carefully written and studied (and sometimes even set up in type) before they were delivered, Cromwell's speeches were spoken impromptu without notes, "and a day or two later he was unable to recall the words he had used."

There was a similarity in the circumstances in which the two men held power, both virtually unknown until they were between forty and fifty, and both having "about five years of power and supreme eminence"

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THE eighteenth ordinary general meeting of the Associated British Picture Corporation, Limited, was held on 27th September in London.

Sir Philip Warter, who presided, said that in the profit and loss and appropriation account, provisions for E.P.T. and Deferred Repairs were deducted before arriving at the trading profit of the group, which amounted to £2,135,890 as compared with £2,102,191 for the previous year. The provision for depreciation and amortisation of £351,555 was £25,902 higher than in the previous year, whilst the net profit applicable to the Corporation was increased from £490,501 to £494,483. Having regard to the difficult trading conditions, that result could be considered as very satisfactory. The board recommended the payment of a final ordinary dividend of 12½ per cent. actual, less tax, making the total distribution for the year 20 per cent., less tax. The subsidiary and associated companies had all achieved satisfactory results.

Their studios at Elstree were now being cleared of army stores and arrangements were in hand for extensive modifications and re-equipment which would bring them into line with the most modern practice so that the Corporation could play its full part in the production of high grade British pictures for which there was an increasing demand both at home and overseas.

The figures for the current year to date were satisfactory and it was reasonable to assume that the net results for the year to 31st March, 1946, would be comparable with those of the year under review.

The report was adopted.

before their early deaths. They both believed in the supreme value of human personality. As Mr. Foot points out: "Cromwell's argument for toleration was never founded on the mass or the class, but always in the terms of the individual." But in one important respect they differed. "Cromwell found the will of God in an unbroken series of victories. . . . Lincoln had the more difficult task of trying to learn God's will from the lessons of many defeats." It was because he thought always of the individual that the legacy that our one British dictator bequeathed to us was toleration. "I had rather that Mohammedanism were permitted amongst us than that one of God's children be persecuted."

Mr. Foot affirms and repeats that both Cromwell and Lincoln were simple men—but in the case of Cromwell, at any rate, he seems to use the word in the sense of meaning a man of simple tastes. That Cromwell was undoubtedly, but in character very unlike "the typical Englishman of the modern world," as Gardiner affirms. Cromwell was a visionary who wrestled with God before he found the answer to his problems. He was a soldier who revolutionised tactics with the controlled cavalry charge and who never knew defeat.

Cromwell believed that God made him victorious, but at moments he was puzzled and almost regretful that it should be so. He would rather have been only a prudent English country gentleman of good family. But then his God or demon took hold of him, the Welsh streak came uppermost, and he acted violently, unexpectedly, upon an intuition which dismayed and startled the men about him. Lincoln was cast in a more sober mould.

The Windmill. Edited by REGINALD MOORE and EDWARD LANE. *Heinemann.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

Without suggesting editorial plagiarism, this magazine is rapidly becoming a rival to *Horizon* and a worthy successor to the *Mercury*. The standard both of book production and of contributions is consistently high and the editors know how to combine a pleasing variety of style and subject matter with a well arranged harmony and literary distinction. In a short and succinct editorial they state that their policy is guided by "a sense of the past, an awareness of the present and a curiosity about the future," and the balance is nicely kept. The emphasis is on creative rather than critical writing; a feature about which there will be considerable argument but which, if carefully selected and presented, is surely worth while, is the publication of extracts from longer forthcoming works, mainly fiction. Of these "Winter Song" from a novel in preparation by James Hanley arouses particular interest; and of the short stories one by Frank O'Connor is above the fairly high average of the rest. Of the critical writing G. W. Stonier's "An Alphabet of Literary Prejudice" shows that critic at his whimsical best; and outstanding also is Ruthven Todd's erudite and amusingly illustrated essay on how some of the scientific theories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have coloured the art and philosophy of that period. The poems are perhaps generally less good; but the best piece of the entire volume is a brilliantly revealing article by P. H. Newby: "Written In Cairo." Altogether this is an excellent four-and-sixpennyworth.

Week-end Competitions

No. 819

Set by W. R.

Six Guineas are offered for the best quotations to be inscribed on the base of a statue of Cézanne, Debussy, Proust, the Wright Brothers or Freud. Entries by October 16.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 816

Set by William Whitebait.

Competitors are invited to write a pub-crawl in verse. Not more than fourteen lines.

Report by William Whitebait.

Very sober—appropriate to the times—most of these pub-crawls turned out to be. Only one really drunken poem, which began

In the midst of a pubbly medoly . . .

but ended on a note of forced gaiety. The winners managed (on paper, at any rate) to strike beer, and I enjoyed Susan Knowles's pub names, Robert Upcott's contempt, Snomis's round of argument, and the skill with which R. J. P. Hewison found the seventeenth century equivalent of "one for the road." These four divide the prizes equally.

SORRY, NO BEER

Crown me with *Roses*, saddle my *Antelope*:
I would abroad and plumb the local wells.
. . . Truth only at the bottom? All sold out? The *Hope*
As empty as the *Flask*? Yea, the *Eight Bells*
Mock me with silent tongues, the *Pier* is dry
And the *Plough's* idle; to my clamorous need
See the *Lord Nelson* turn his blinded eye.
The *Wheatsheaf's* parched, on every door I read
The arid: "Shut till Tuesday night." The *Friend At Hand* is out and the *King's Arms*
Offer no solace; at the *World's End*
The *Prospect's* poor; the *Queen's Head's* lost its charms.
The Doves are dumb, for who would love or praise
These dry-as-dust, these de-hydrated days?

SUSANNE KNOWLES

No torrid lupanars assuage their timid thirst;
The second hand, in England's grey and pleasant land,
Is classier than the first.
A port-and-lemon and a novelty sextet,
A girl to nudge and fumble free . . .
The rest is but a ritual, inset
With sodden formulæ.

Chorus

So out into the suburbs, lads, whene'er the movies pall,
And beat 'em up with wild hiccup while round the pubs you crawl,
Come! get into a coma on a little shop-soiled soma,
With Ted and Fred and Perce and Les, and here's the skin off your nose,
And one for the road, and who's in the chair? and easy as she goes.
And mud in your eye, and drink up, chaps, and wotcher Sid, what's yours?
It's ever so cute in the Rose and Crown until they close the doors.

ROBERT UPCOTT

We dealt with the dollar and settled lend-lease
In the Tudor lounge of the Fox and Geese,
And there wasn't much left of the Bevin plan
By the time we emerged from the Cunning Man.
Then we just looked in at the Star and Garter
And agreed the United Nations charter
(Though we'd still quite a job at the Earl of Chatham
To dispose of the splitting of the atom).
That left us the Bull and the Cock and Hen
Where we talked metaphysics till almost ten.
Our last port of call was the far side of town,
Its name was THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN.

SNOMIS

Just time to snatch, at half-past five,
A quick one in St. Stephen's Dive,
But it was natural to try one
At the contiguous Red Lion,
And who'd omit—except old maids—
The Clarence, Silver Cross and Shades?
Logic, locality, the pinch
Of hunger, called for Henry Finch;
Need of itinerary snorts
For drinks eponymous at Short's,
Which led inevitably to
The Station Buffet, Waterloo,
Where there was just the time to put
A quick one down before they shut.

R. J. P. HEWISON

Personal

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Personal—continued

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LABOUR Monthly, October, 1945. "The Coal Situation in Gt. Britain," Arthur Horner; "Problems of Peace," R. P. Arnot; also articles by Clemens Dutt, William Rust, George Rude, Maurice Dobb, Arthur Clegg. From 134 Ballards Lane, N.3. Post paid, 7*d.*

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